

Wound care management

For patients, family members and carers

What is a wound?

- A wound is a break in the skin caused by injury or surgery
- Wounds can be accidental, surgical, or occur because of underlying health causes. For example: poor blood circulation, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, high cholesterol, kidney disease, osteoarthritis, obesity, paralysis, increased pressure in the legs, smoking and infection
- Depending on your type of wound, where the wound is located and any underlying health conditions this will affect the time it may take for your wound to heal. It is often longer for older adults or people with mobility issues
- Wounds need moisture to grow over the wound and form new tissue, which is helped through specific wound dressings chosen by a health care professional
- Keeping the wound covered with a dressing reduces pain and lowers the risk of infection. Wounds which are covered and kept moist, heal more rapidly than those exposed to air

Guidelines for healing

- Please do not pick or scratch the wound - this can increase the risk of infection and possibly sepsis (blood poisoning)
- Please do not attempt to change the dressing yourself unless asked to do so by your health care professional - as this will increase the risk of infection and wound getting worse
- Please avoid bathing, showering or getting the affected area wet until you are instructed to do so by your health care professional as this may cause your wound to reopen and delay wound healing
- Please do not expose the wound to air or the sun to 'dry out' as this will delay wound healing
- If advised to do so, please keep the wound rested and elevated

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- Please do not cover the dressing or wound with anything waterproof as this can make the wound soggy and can increase the chance of infection. Please do not use tapes and adhesives, as this can increase the chance of skin damage
 - Please don't smoke - smoking reduces the supply of oxygen to heal the wound. This will delay healing and may cause your wound to get worse
 - Please do not apply creams or lotions to the wound area
 - Please try and avoid banging or knocking the wound area and easing pressure where possible
 - Please try and eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids to help healing
 - Do take pain relief medication, such as paracetamol, exactly as prescribed if able to do so

Please contact the community nursing team for advice if any of the following happens:

- The wound looks worse, gets bigger, or you are concerned with the look of the wound
- The area around the wound is red, hot to touch, swollen or painful. Some redness and swelling is normal at the beginning, however, this should get better within a week. Your community nurse will review your wound at each visit
- Any fluid/discharge has reached the edge of the dressing or there is excessive bleeding.
- You are beginning to lose feeling around the wound area
- Your toes or fingers are becoming discoloured
- You bang or knock the wound causing further damage

Patient's Name:

Carers Name:

Community Nursing (CN) Team:

CN Team contact details:

Monday to Friday 08.30 -18.00.

Evenings, Weekends and Bank holidays.

In an emergency contact 111, or visit the Accident and Emergency Department.

The community nurse will discuss with you how often they will visit.

The days and frequency of the community nurse visit may vary depending on any changes to your wound. Visiting times may be subject to change but your community nursing team will contact you or your carer.

Please remember to call your CN Team if you need to cancel or rearrange your visit.



'How to change a simple wound dressing...' video
Scan the QR code to watch the video.



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