

Wound care – a guide for patients and carers

Tissue Viability Team

Patient Information Leaflet

(To be used in conjunction with the leaflet 'Wound care and pressure ulcers – a guide to a nourishing diet')

Introduction

This leaflet is for patients who have a wound or pressure ulcer. It will help you to understand how you can help your wound to improve or heal faster.

What is a wound?

A wound is a break in the skin which can have many different causes, such as:

- surgery
- injury
- pressure sore or bed sore
- leg ulcer due to problems with the circulation

Wound healing

Most wounds will heal within two weeks but there are circumstances that will lead to delayed healing. The best ways of improving wound healing are as follows:

Healthy diet

Eating well can make a huge difference to your wound and will encourage it to heal. Your health professional will give you more information about this and a leaflet about eating a nourishing diet to help your wound to heal.

Changing position

Change your position regularly in bed and when you are sitting in a chair. The more you move around, the less likely you are to get problems such as blood clots, bed sores or chest infections. These can all lead to an increase in the length of your stay in hospital.

Pain relief

Take regular pain relief tablets, if you need them. If you are in pain, you will not want to move or eat and healing will be delayed. Some pain relief tablets can lead to constipation so please speak to your GP or nurse, if you have any concerns.

Infection

Try not to touch your wound as this can make a wound infection much more likely. However, if you have to touch your wound to care for it, always wash your hands before and after touching the wound area.

Let the nursing or medical staff know if you notice any of the following:

- your wound is oozing
- the dressing becomes wet at any time
- you experience an increased amount of pain from the wound
- an unusual smell from the wound
- an increase in redness around the wound

Dressings

To aid with healing, it is likely that you will need to have a dressing on the wound for one to seven days. It is unlikely the dressing will be needed for longer than this. This dressing will need to be changed regularly.

If you have a dressing on your wound, it is important that you are fully aware of and follow the treatment plan you have agreed with the health professional that is caring for you.

Stopping smoking

Stopping smoking will improve wound healing. The Dudley Group has a dedicated NHS Stop Smoking Service that can provide medication and advice, to give you the best chance of quitting smoking for good.

Speak to the health professional that is caring for you if you would like more information about this service.

If you have any concerns about your wound or any other aspect of your care, do not hesitate to speak to the nursing or medical staff looking after you.

Can I find out more?

Tissue viability nurses are specialists who often see patients that are experiencing problems with wound healing, or wounds that need specialist treatments. For more information about this, you can contact the team at Russells Hall Hospital on 01384 244368 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday).

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Tissue viability team on 01384 244368 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number:
01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/tissue-viability-community/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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