



**This is a guide only and does not  
replace clinical judgment**

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# Wound Care

Information for health professionals



# Wound Care

## Assessment

- Wound assessment should be undertaken by trained, experienced health practitioners
- Assess and document:
  - physical examination
  - psychological well-being
  - nutritional status
  - pain (including use of a pain scale)
  - history of previous wounds
  - current wound duration, site, treatments
  - wound characteristics: size, shape, depth, tissue type, exudate, margin, surrounding skin, signs of infection
- Reassess and document progress in healing regularly
- Reassess pain at each wound dressing using a standardized assessment tool



**A moist wound environment enables migration of tissue repairing cells. Extreme wetness or dryness may delay healing.**

- Refer to a specialist if there is:
  - uncertainty in diagnosis
  - deterioration or failure to progress to heal
  - unexpected change in level or type of pain or exudate
  - signs of infection or ischaemia

## Management

- Wound management should be undertaken by trained, experienced health practitioners
- Multidisciplinary management promotes healing and improved outcomes
- Cleanse wounds with a neutral, non-toxic solution (e.g. potable tap water or normal saline), with minimal trauma
- Remove necrotic and devitalised tissue through mechanical, sharp, autolytic or biological debridement
- If dry gangrene or eschar is present, do not debride until arterial flow is re-established



- Use a topical antimicrobial agent in clients with critically colonised, localised or spreading wound infection; the length of treatment determined by the response
- A moist wound environment should be maintained for optimal healing
- Dressings should:
  - maintain a moist wound environment
  - manage wound exudate and protect the peri-ulcer skin
  - minimise friction, shear, skin irritation and pressure
  - be non-adherent to reduce trauma
  - be cost effective and able to be changed once/day or less often where possible
- Promote oxygenation of wound environment - avoid cold, dehydration, smoking, stress, pain
- Implement effective pain management during wound dressings
- Encourage optimal levels of nutrition
- Provide education on wound care