



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

WOUND CARE

Dry dressing

What is a wound?

A wound is an injury that tears, scrapes, or cuts the skin open. “Wound care” is what you do to care for your wound to help it heal and to prevent infection.

You may need to have the wound closed with stitches or staples to help the wound heal better. Using stitches or staples may not cause as much scarring. Most wounds usually take 2 to 6 weeks to heal. **Call your doctor if the stitches break or staples come out.**

Why use a dry dressing?

A dry dressing or bandage may be used if your wound is stitched or stapled closed and you are having drainage. Dry dressings can also be used to protect your wound. Your caregiver will tell you how often to change your bandage. Your caregiver will tell you when you can shower or get the wound wet.

What is the way to change a dry dressing or bandage?

1. Gather all the supplies you will need.
 - a new bandage
 - medical tape
 - cleaning solution. Your caregiver will tell you what solution to use.
 - a plastic trash bag for the dirty bandages.
 - a plastic sheet, towel or pad to protect the area where you are changing the bandage.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Put the plastic sheet, towel or pad under the part of your body where the wound is to keep the bed or furniture dry.

4. Remove the old dressing. Look at the old dressing and see if there is any drainage and what the drainage looks like.
5. Throw the old dressing in the plastic garbage bag.
6. Wash your hands again.
7. Look at the wound for any signs of infection.
8. Clean the area with the cleaning solution.
9. Put the new bandage over the wound and tape the bandage in place.
10. Remember to wash your hands when you are all finished.

Call your doctor if you have any of the following signs of infection around your wound or if your wound starts bleeding:

- swelling
- redness
- new drainage
- change in the color of the drainage
- bad smell from the area or on the bandages
- skin around the wound is hot to touch.
- an increase in your temperature
- more pain or soreness