

Caring for your wound





Introduction

Together with your healthcare practitioner, you may have agreed that you will care for your wound yourself – or you may be helping someone else to care for a wound.

It's important that you know that you are not alone and that you can still access support and guidance if you need it: you can find more information on the last page.

Changing your dressing

Your healthcare practitioner will have told you how often to change your dressing. You can change your dressing sooner than this if:



The dressing has slipped



The dressing is leaking



The dressing has become painful





1.

Getting ready to change a dressing



Gather your equipment and place it on a table which has been cleaned with sanitising wipes or washing up liquid.



Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water and dry carefully.

2.

Removing the old dressing



Try to remove it without touching the wound or the part of the dressing which has been in contact with the wound.



Take your time removing your dressing. Most of our dressings can be removed safely by gently & slowly peeling from the corners.



If the dressing is stuck to your wound you can soak it in water and wait for it to loosen.

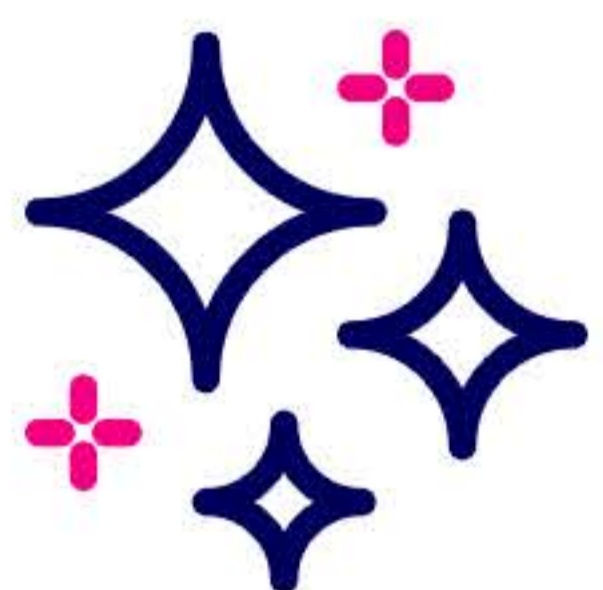


Place the dirty dressing immediately into a waste bag and then wash your hands.





3. Cleaning your wound



Before you put your new dressing on, you need to gently clean your wound.



Use fresh, clean gauze and water to clean the area around your wound.



If possible, wear sterile gloves for this.



Dry the skin carefully.



If you are able, you can clean the wound itself with tap water and gauze, starting from the middle and working out.

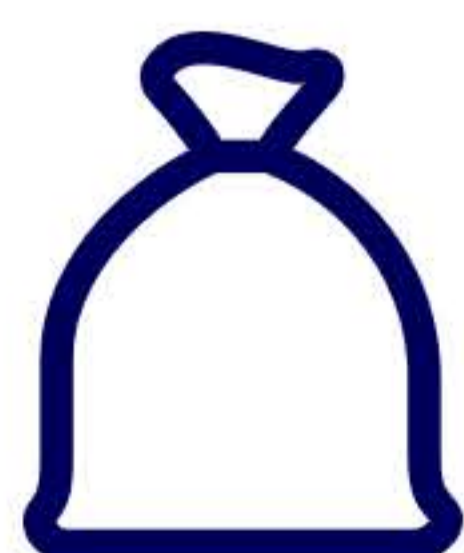
4. Applying the new dressing



Your new dressing will have instructions on the pack on how to apply it.



Follow these and any other guidance you have been given about applying any creams or tapes.



Don't forget to seal the rubbish bag and dispose of it according to the advice you have been given.



Finally, wash your hands.



Looking out for problems

There are some signs you should look out for, as these might mean that your wound has become infected:



Wound size

Has your wound increased in size?
(You can monitor size by taking photos)



Redness

Is there any redness around the wound which is increasing?



Leakage

Is there more wound leakage than usual or does it look different?



Pain

Are you in more pain than usual from your wound?



Smell

Does your wound have a different smell from usual?



Feeling unwell

Are you feeling generally unwell?

If you see any of these signs, you should call either your **healthcare practitioner** or **NHS 111** for advice.

Thank you for helping to care for your wound.

By doing this, you are playing your part in relieving pressure on the NHS.

