



International Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Foundation (ippf)

Wound Care Fact Sheet

Guidelines in caring for your wounds. Each individual's situation may be different.

Always discuss your situation and concerns with your physician.

Cleansing the Wounds:

- Always consult with your physician before cleansing an open wound for appropriate solutions and technique for wound cleansing.
- Cleanse all wounds with each dressing change.
- Cleanse wounds gently with a mild soap and soft cloth.
- Do not use products that can be irritating or damage the fragile tissue. Avoid products such as peroxide, betadine, or antibacterial solutions.
- Do not use high pressure irrigation devices to cleanse wound. Also avoid water pics, or high pressure whirlpool therapy.

Prevention:

When skin integrity is interrupted, it places you at a greater risk for infection. Wound dressings protect wounds from further damage and act as a barrier to infection. Preventing infection is a primary concern for patients on immunosuppressant medications. It is so important that some physicians prescribe antibiotics as a preventative measure when the immune system is at its weakest.

It is VERY IMPORTANT to perform frequent and careful inspection of your wound(s) for signs and symptoms of infection.

Signs of a wound infection may include:

1. Pain and Tenderness of Wound
2. Redness around Wound
3. Swelling
4. Increased Drainage from Wound
5. Purulent (pus-like) Drainage
6. Increased Odor from Wound
7. Fever
8. Increased WBC (blood work)
9. **Call your physician immediately if a wound shows signs of infection.**

Bathing:

A mild soap can be used for bathing or showering. Be sure to rinse your skin thoroughly. Check with your physician first before adding anything to the bath water. After soaking, gently clean healing wounds with plain water and gently dab dry.

Dressings:

Wound healing must take place in a moist environment. The importance of moist wound healing based on wound physiology requires that newer advanced wound care products be used. With over 2,000 wound care products on the market, it is important to understand the wound products and the principles of optimal wound care as well as be cost –effective.

Wound care should minimize trauma to the wound bed and surrounding tissue, protect the wound from contaminants and bacterial invasion.

Avoid dressings or bandages that dry out or stick to your skin.

The goal of treatment is to decrease blister formation and promote healing of existing wounds.

Other Wound Care Options: Advanced wound care products can also be beneficial for treatment of these wounds. Select products that will not stick to the wounds nor cause trauma. Some examples of these products are:

Hydrogels: Available as a Cover, Filler or Impregnated Gauze. Hydrogels create or maintain a moist wound environment. They are effective in hydrating wound surfaces. They are a non-adherent dressing and can be removed without trauma to the wound. They are also very cool, comfortable, and soothing to the wound. Some examples of these products are: Curagel, Tenderwet, Cool Magic, Intrasite Gel, Saf Gel, Dermagran, Restore and Skinintegrity.

Contact Layer: A thin, non-adherent sheet placed directly on the wound bed to protect the tissue from direct contact with other agents. They are porous to allow wound fluid to pass through for absorption. Some examples of these products are: Dermanet, Select Silver, Restore Contact and Mepitel.

Foams: Are highly absorbent dressings. Some have adhesive tapes surrounding an “island of foam”. Best Used for heavily draining wounds and weeping ulcers. Foams are very absorbent, comfortable and conformable. Some examples of foams are: Polymem, COPA, Mepilex, and Allevyn Gentle.

Impregnated Gauze: These dressings are impregnated with Gel, Vaseline, Petrolatum or other items to prevent dressing from sticking to the wound. The dressing helps provide and maintain a moist wound environment. Some examples of these dressings are: Adaptic, Kerlix AMD, Telfa AMD, and Xeroform.

Ointments and Creams: Antimicrobial topical products such as Neosporin, Polysporin or Bactraban have been used to treat superficial breaks in the skin. Bactraban requires a prescription from your doctor. These ointments and creams are usually covered with a secondary dressing. Select a dressing that will not stick or dry onto the skin. Antibiotic ointments and creams can help treat infection. These products will also keep the wound moist, which is a goal of treatment. A cream like Sulfa Silvadine (also available by prescription from your physician) is less expensive and comes in large quantities and can be useful for large wounds and/or open blisters. Some dermatologist recommends Vaseline or Aquaphor as a moisturizer. Always refer to your physician before applying any topical creams or ointments.

Dressing changes: The frequency of dressing changes depends on the wound and the particular dressing selected to treat it. Talk with your physician and/or wound care nurse to familiarize yourself with the correct treatment protocols.

Obtaining Dressings:

Advanced wound care products are available through medical product suppliers such as National Rehab. National Rehab is a leading provider of wound care products and lives up to its Mission Statement: “To achieve successful healthcare outcomes and improve the quality of patients’ lives”.

**For more information, contact the IPPF at:
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