



Wound Facts

- ◆ If you have a wound, you may have some questions about how you should care for it
- ◆ This guide will offer information to help you understand more about wound healing. Ask your healthcare provider for more information

What is a wound?

A wound is an injury of the skin. When the skin is damaged or disrupted underlying layers of skin may be exposed.

Once the skin is injured, it loses the ability to protect the body. This is very important because our skin is our barrier against infection.

What causes a wound?

Wounds can be caused by many things, such as:

- ◆ **Poor blood flow**
 - ◆ Venous leg ulcers may be an example
- ◆ **Diabetes**
 - ◆ Wounds may appear on the bottom of feet. They may start from a small crack or split in the skin
- ◆ **Pressure Ulcer** (may also be known as a "Bed Sore")
 - ◆ Wounds caused by too much pressure against the skin and body
- ◆ **Accidents**
 - ◆ Punctures, cuts, scrapes, lacerations, and skin tears
- ◆ **Surgical incisions**
- ◆ **Burns**

If you are unsure of how your wound developed discuss this with your health care provider.

How do wounds heal?

Wounds heal through a series of complex actions: After you are injured, the blood supply to the wound increase to help fight infection and produce new cells. The new cells will assist with the growth of new tissue which fills in the wound and creates a new skin covering. This wound healing process can take weeks to months and may be effected by your overall health.

While your wound is healing, you will have a wound dressing that will cover your wound. It is important to keep a dressing over your wound for several reasons:

- ◆ It will protect your wound from bacteria and germs
- ◆ The dressing will be able to absorb drainage from the wound
- ◆ The dressing will help to keep your wound moist
 - ◆ **A moist wound heals more quickly**

What helps a wound to heal?

Follow your physician's or healthcare provider's direction for taking care of your wound.

- ◆ Keep your wound clean and covered with the dressing that has been ordered for you. Change your wound dressing as recommended. Always wash your hands before and after dressing changes. Gloves should be worn if your wound is draining or infected to protect you and your loved ones.
- ◆ Eating the right food is very important for wound healing. You can help your wound to heal by making sure you get enough calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals. Meat, cheese, eggs, beans, nuts, and fish are good sources of protein which help the body to build new tissue. Check with your physician about what type of diet is right for you.
- ◆ Smoking delays healing. If you smoke, try to stop or cut down. Smoking causes the small blood vessels to constrict or become smaller. This decreases the amount of oxygen and nutrients that can be delivered to your wound.
- ◆ Take your medications as recommended by your physician.
- ◆ Keep pressure off of your wound. If you must sit or lay on your wound, be sure to change positions frequently.

WHEN TO CALL THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER
(doctor, nurse, therapist)

- Any change in the wound that is a concern to you
- If the drainage from the wound increases
- If you have a sudden increase in pain, or new pain in your wound

- If the area around the wound gets red, swollen or painful to touch
- If the wound color changes from pink or red to a tan, brown or black color
- If you get a fever, or if the wound odor gets worse
- If you have questions

NOTE: The recommendation and information in this material should not be considered a substitute for medical advice or diagnosis. See package insert for full instructions and precautions. Please contact your healthcare provider with any questions regarding the care or condition of your wound.

