



What to look for at dressing change

Looking after your wound and changing your dressing is straightforward once you know how!

Remove your dressing

Remove your dressing taking care not to damage your skin. Look at the underside of the dressing before you discard it, to see if there are any changes in your wound, e.g. if there is any blood or pus present on the dressing. If your dressing is soaked through, you may need to change it more often, or change to a more absorbent dressing.

Check your wound

Look at your wound to see if there have been any changes since your last dressing change. Are there any signs of infection, e.g. odour or discharge from the wound? If so, contact your healthcare professional for advice.

Check the surrounding skin

Check the skin surrounding your wound for signs of damage. If the skin surrounding your wound is wet, white and boggy, it may mean that wound fluid is in contact with your skin for too long. You may want to change your dressing more often, or change the type of dressing you use. If you are using an adhesive dressing, look for signs of

damage caused by the adhesive. This type of damage usually occurs where the dressing has been removed. If present, treat any breaks in the skin with antiseptic cream and contact your healthcare professional for advice. Ideally do not apply a new dressing on the damaged skin but do cover your wound if possible.

Apply your new dressing

Before you apply your new dressing, cleanse and moisturise your leg (see p. 8–11), taking care to moisturise up to the edge of your wound. Allow it to absorb before you apply your new dressing. Allow 1 cm around the wound to the edge of the absorbent pad on the dressing. Ensure you follow the instructions for the dressing you are using to make sure it is applied properly. Change your dressing as advised by your clinician, or if it becomes loose or soggy. 

