

## **TITLE:     WOUND DRESSING PROTOCOL**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Whenever you have a wound, whether it's a minor cut or a major incision, it's crucial to care for it properly. Part of the process includes wound dressing. There are a variety of options when it comes to dressings, and to determine which is the best and most effective depends on what sort of wound you have. The treating doctor will provide you with a wound dressing regime.

### **WHAT IS A WOUND**

A wound is a break in the continuity of the skin following injury or surgery etc. Wounds heal by primary intention or secondary intention depending upon whether the wound may be closed with sutures or left to repair, whereby damaged tissue is restored by the formation of connective tissue and re-growth of epithelium. Wound dressing must be done under aseptic technique to aide in healing.

#### Simple wound dressing

Note: choice of solution for dressing wound is decided by the treating doctor.

#### Items Required:

- Prospray or 70% Isopropyl Alcohol and non-sterile gauze (to clean the wound trolley or tray)
- Gloves (non sterile and sterile for surgical wounds)
- Apron
- Face mask
- sterile wound dressing pack (cotton wool and gauze)
- sterile instruments
- sterile kidney dish
- sterile gallipot
- non sterile receiver
- Normal saline solution
- Drez solution
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Scissors and pen

Always check the items you take for expiry date and clarity (if applicable).

1. Verify order from treating doctor and client's need for this procedure. Perform hand wash with soap and running water. If Tap is not flowing use alcohol rub.

2. Clean dressing trolley or tray with 70% Isopropyl alcohol. Wear your apron.

3. Approach client and briefly introduce yourself. Politely ask client to come with to the treatment area.

- Give the client a place to sit
- Explain procedure to patient and provide privacy. Enquire from client if he has any known allergic reactions to plaster. If he or she has report to treating doctor before commencing with wound dressing
- If patient is in pain, ask for pain score (ask client on a scale of 1 to 10 where would he or she rate their pain, with 10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest). Inform the treating doctor of client's pain score and based on their advice offer interventions like ice packs or pain medication (only if prescribed by the treating doctor).
- If patient refuses the procedure, explain the importance of the procedure and get patient to rest and mentally prepare himself first.
- Prepare the environment by switching on the lights, switching off the fans, screening the client and ensuring the correct working height. Always position your trolley or tray and stand such that your dominant hand is nearer to the patient.

4. Perform hand hygiene with water and soap or hand sanitizer.

- Wear gloves, Open the sterile wound dressing pack without touching anything inside.
- Wear mask

5. Pour normal saline and open other dressing items, carefully touching only the packaging.

6. Expose wound with gloves. Palpate around/ along the wound site and note any Colour, Odour, Consistency and Amount of exudates (if applicable).

7. Discard used gloves and perform surgical hand wash. Dry with the hand dryer.

8. Drape the area where you are cleaning the wound with a sterile drape. Be careful not to touch anywhere else (especially the client) except the drape.

9. Pour out solution to soak and squeeze out excess from the cotton balls and arrange any items in the sterile field (where necessary) using the forceps provided.

10. Using one cotton ball at a time and one swipe per cotton ball, clean the wound from the least contaminated area (ie. the inner of the wound) to the most contaminated area. Lastly,

clean the area surrounding the wound. The technique for cleaning the wound would be to take a clean cotton ball using your non-dominant hand and pass it over to your dominant hand outside the sterile field and use the dominant hand to clean the wound. If patient seems uncomfortable or in pain, stop and ask the patient if he needs you to stop the procedure for a while.

11. Tap the cleaned areas dry with gauze.

12. Cover the wound with sterile gauze and suitable/ prescribed solution. Apply bandage or plaster to secure wound.

13. Explain to client that the procedure has been completed and ask if client has any questions for you like “how is their wound healing?”, “how long will their wound take to heal?” etc. Ensure client’s safety and comfort levels and that the call bell is within reach before leaving client (for clients on the ward). Inform client of change of dressing date. Agree on a suitable time for the client and assist client to book for that appointment. Thank your client, remove your gloves and assist client to dress up.

14. Discard items on the trolley, decontaminate used items, clean trolley and remove gloves. Wash hands with hand and soap and use hand dryer.

15. Record a summary of the procedure in the system and give proper account of how the wound looks (any abnormalities). Also provide next visit date for change of dressing and ensure it is booked in the system.