

Where can I buy my dressing supplies?

Your home health office has a list of local suppliers of wound care products. If you haven't been given this information, ask your home health nurse.

You will quickly learn how much supplies your wound will need. Your home care nurse can also advise you about the most affordable and effective dressing for your wound.

When should I get help?

Contact your doctor or home health nurse if you notice any of the following:

- a temperature of 38.5°C (101.3F)
- increased soreness or pain in or around the wound
- increased redness or swelling around the wound
- foul smelling drainage coming from the wound or the wound smells foul even after cleansing
- an unusual amount of bleeding from the wound

Questions I have:

For more information, contact:

Home Health Office stamp

HealthLinkBC **8-1-1**

Call any time you have any health questions or concerns. HealthLinkBC is open 24 hours.

Available in 130 languages. For an interpreter, say your language in English. Wait until an interpreter comes on the phone.



Doing Dressing Changes at Home

How to care for your wound between home health nurse visits


Home Health



www.fraserhealth.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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To order: patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca



Steps for changing your dressing

1. If needed, take pain medicine 30 minutes before you start your dressing change. Take your pain medicine as directed by your doctor.
2. **Clean your hands with soap and water. Dry them well with a clean towel.**
3. Lay out the supplies for your dressing change on a clean surface or towel.
4. If you want to:
Warm the saline to body temperature. To warm it, put warm water in a bowl and place the closed container of saline in it.

Remove the dressing and take a shower to clean the wound (see #7).
5. Open and prepare your dressing supplies. You do not need to wear gloves for your dressing change but anyone who helps you must wear gloves.
6. Pre-cut pieces of tape so they will be easy to place on the fresh dressing.
7. Loosen and remove the old dressing. If necessary, soak off the dressing with saline. A dressing can be soaked and removed in the shower.

When removing the dressing, pull slowly and gently on the tape, holding the skin nearby with the other hand.

If needed, gently remove any remaining dressing with your fingertips.

8. Put the old dressing in a plastic bag.
9. **Clean your hands again or use hand sanitizer.**
10. Look at your wound.
Note any increase in size, pain, drainage, and changes in colour.

Tell your doctor or home health nurse about what the wound looks like.
11. Clean the wound gently with:
 normal saline iodine
 chlorhexidine Prontosan®
Checked (✓) of by your home health nurse

Clean the wound from the centre outwards. Do not scrub the wound.

If told to, gently fill all spaces in the wound loosely with:

If you have irritated skin around your wound, put on:

This keeps the surrounding skin healthy.

12. Put the outer dressing on:

13. Secure the dressing in place with:

tape gauze wrap (Kling)

Other: _____
Checked (✓) of by your home health nurse

14. Throw the plastic garbage bag in regular garbage.

15. Clean your hands with soap and water or a hand sanitizer.

How often should I change my dressing?

Your doctor or your home health nurse tells you on how often to change the dressing.

How often depends on:

- the amount of drainage expected from the wound
- the use of special ointments or creams on the wound
- the type of dressing used

If your wound is deep, your doctor or home health nurse will give you instructions to 'fill the wound' space. Always fill the space lightly (think fluffy, not stuffy). You do this until the wound has healed close to the skin surface. This helps make sure the wound heals from the bottom up.

What can I do to help close my wound?

Your body has a wonderful ability to heal itself.

These tips help you help your body close your wound:

- Make a good balanced meal plan with increased protein and fluids. A vitamin supplement might be helpful (Talk with your doctor).
- Keep any pressure off the healing wound.
- Stop or reduce smoking.
- If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugars in control.
- If it will not harm your wound, mild to moderate exercise can help increase blood flow to the area.
- Reduce stresses in your life. Stress slows healing.
- Control your pain. Uncontrolled pain can slow healing.