

Get your wound dressed for success!

It is a long-lasting myth that wounds heal better when they are exposed to the air. Here we explain all the benefits of using a dressing to help your wound to heal.

Use a dressing to create a healing environment

Covering your wound with a dressing to create the perfect healing conditions. Wounds heal faster in a moist, clean and warm environment than when they are exposed to the air.

Reduce the risk of infection

Covering your wound also reduces the risk of infection as the dressing offers temporary protection from the outside world while your skin barrier repairs.

Reduce pain

Covering your wound with a dressing can help to reduce pain since any nerve endings within the wound are kept moist and protected from exposure to the air.

Treat infection

If a wound is locally infected, it may be treated with a dressing that has antimicrobial properties, such as honey or silver, to help fight the infection in the wound¹. If the infection has spread beyond the wound, antibiotics may be needed.

Protect the wound and surrounding skin from damage

Using a dressing can help to protect the wound from further knocks and bumps while healing takes place.

If the skin around the wound is fragile and delicate, it is important to use a dressing that does not stick too firmly to the skin as it may cause damage on removal. Gentle dressings such as those made from silicone, can



stay in place while not causing any further damage to the skin.

Select the right wound dressing

Your healthcare professional will help to suggest an appropriate dressing for your wound, but there are some basic principles for choosing the correct dressing:

- If a wound is too dry, it will need a dressing that is able to add moisture to the wound (hydration)
- If a wound produces too much wound fluid (known as exudate), this needs to be absorbed by a dressing to stop the wound becoming soggy and enlarged. Dressings are available that have the ability to absorb a small to a very large volume of exudate.

Getting the balance of moisture right in the wound is important and is discussed in more detail on pages 15–17.

Get your wound regularly reassessed by a healthcare professional

Wound dressings are important, but a thorough assessment must also be carried out before a dressing is selected to identify the individual needs of your wound so that the most appropriate type of dressing is used. As your wound improves, and its requirements change, you may need to change dressing to match. For example, if it produces less wound fluid, you can use a thinner, less absorbent dressing.

