

- Elevate your legs
- Wear compression stockings
- Quit smoking or reduce the amount you smoke
- Get good nutrition

Storing your wound-care supplies

Protect your bandages and any wound-care ointments, salves and medicines you received from your doctor or nurse. These supplies are valuable and have been selected especially for you and your type of wound.

Store your supplies in a clean, re-sealable bag. Your nurse or pharmacist will tell you if there are special storage instructions.

Warning signs

Check your wound carefully each day. If you notice any of the following warning signs, call your doctor immediately.

- A change in the color of the drainage coming from your wound
- Increased redness or warmth around the wound
- Increased pain or swelling around the wound
- A fever higher than 100.5 F or chills
- General weakness
- Confusion or difficulty thinking clearly
- A rapid heart beat
- Uncontrollable pain

OUR MISSION

As people of Providence, we reveal God's love for all, especially the poor and vulnerable, through our compassionate service.

OUR CORE VALUES

Respect, Compassion, Justice, Excellence, Stewardship

www.providence.org/oregon



**Wound Care:
It's more than just
a dressing change**

You play an important role.

You're an important member of your wound-care team. Your doctor, nurses and others will do their best to help your wound heal quickly and completely. However, they need you to take an active role in caring for your wound.

The healing process involves many factors. We'll teach you what it takes to promote wound healing. It's much more than changing a bandage.

Much of the success of your wound healing depends on your level of commitment and involvement.

The care plan

Your nurse will work with you to create a care plan tailored to your wound. Your nurse will teach you how and when to change the dressing on your wound. If you can't change the dressing yourself, you'll need to identify someone – a family member, caregiver or friend – who we can teach to do it for you.



Good nutrition

Good nutrition is necessary for healing. During this time, your body needs extra fluids, protein, vitamins and minerals. Choose from these healthy beverages and protein-rich, vitamin-packed foods to improve your healing process:

- Water
- Fruit juices (Limit these if you have diabetes.)
- Milk
- Decaffeinated teas and coffee (These should not be your main source of fluid.)
- Eggs
- Dairy foods (cheese, yogurt)
- Meat (beef, pork, chicken, fish)
- Dried beans, peas, nuts, seeds (including peanut butter)
- Soy or tofu products
- Whole grains (cereals, breads, pasta, rice)
- Leafy green, orange or yellow vegetables
- Citrus fruits and juices, strawberries, tomatoes

Helpful hints for good nutrition

- Eat five or six small meals a day.
- Make each meal or snack count by having protein in it.
- Take a multivitamin every day. (Vitamin C and zinc are especially important for wound healing.)
- If you don't have much appetite, add a protein powder to any food you eat or try a liquid nutritional supplement, such as Ensure® or Carnation Instant Breakfast®.

Smoking and wound healing

If you smoke, it is important that you quit or at least cut back the amount you smoke.

Smoking causes blood vessels instantly to constrict. When blood vessels constrict, blood flow through your body slows down. Because blood carries the oxygen and nutrients your body needs to heal a wound, you want to increase, not decrease, your blood flow.

Diabetes and wound healing

If you have diabetes, it is very important to control your blood sugar. Wounds are unlikely to heal properly if blood sugar levels exceed 140 mg/dL. For best healing, blood sugar levels should be 120 mg/dL or less.

Your doctor may order a test, hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c), which shows your average blood sugar levels over time. People with diabetes should target their HbA1c levels for 7.0 or less.

Helping wounds heal

You can do a number of things to help your wound heal faster and more completely. Your nurse may ask you to:

- Reduce the amount of pressure against your wound. You may need to use a special pad or a different surface to sit or sleep on.
- Wear shoes or special boots to prevent pressure on your feet
- Avoid rubbing the wound across surfaces when you reposition yourself, such as when you turn over in bed

(continued on back)