

# Changing Your Dressing

Information for patients

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## Podiatry Department

## What is this leaflet about?

This leaflet explains how to change dressings on your feet. You may wish to share this guide with someone who can help you.

Your Podiatrist will have provided you with the following:

1. A sterile dressing pack
2. A sachet of sterile water or antiseptic to clean your wound
3. An appropriate dressing for the type of wound that you have

If you need more guidance or have any problems with carrying out this task, please get in touch with the Podiatry Department as soon as possible. We can offer further guidance or alternative arrangements as needed.

### Step 1: Remove the old dressing

- Carefully remove the dressing from your foot
- If the dressing is stuck to the skin **do not** pull it. This will create more damage to the skin and prevent healing. Instead, prepare a clean basin with warm water and submerge the foot for one minute. You should be able to gently ease the dressing off
- If not, you should soak the dressing for a further minute.

### Step 2: Clean the wound

- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Dry your hands with kitchen roll
- Open both the Universal Dressing Pack and the sterile dressing to be applied to your wound
- Open the white bag and place under the foot if possible
- Pour the sachet of STERETS (antiseptic) or Normasol (sterile water) provided, onto the ulcer to cleanse

- Put on the gloves provided in the dressing pack
- Take out the square drape (folded sheet) from the dressing pack. Unfold it and place down. Move your foot from the white bag onto the drape
- Cover the wound area with 2 pieces of the sterile gauze which will soak up excess water. Dry the foot with remaining pieces of gauze.

### **Step 3: Put on the new dressing**

- Apply the dressing as directed
- Secure with extra tape if provided
- Put the dirty dressing(s) and all the contents from the universal pack into the white bag. This can be disposed of in your normal household waste bin.

## **Some important points to note**

Your Podiatrist will have provided you with extra advice about caring for your wound in between visits. It's important to follow this advice to aid healing and prevent your wound from worsening. You will have been given a follow-up appointment to review your wound.

It is normal to see discolouration or leakage on the dressing, please do not be alarmed.

Antibiotics are not needed for all wounds and they will not make your wound heal faster. Your Podiatrist will arrange a prescription of antibiotics if they are needed.

If you notice any new signs of wound infection, contact the Podiatry Department or the Out of Hours service on the numbers below. Infection can be managed successfully if diagnosed early. Signs of infection include:

- An increase in the amount of fluid leakage onto the dressing
- A new unpleasant odour
- Redness around the wound
- Increased heat from the wound
- People with diabetes may also notice an increase in their blood sugar levels.

**Be aware of sepsis.** Vomiting, dizziness, fast breathing, feeling clammy or having cold toes and fingers, shortness of breath, confusion can all be signs of sepsis, which is a potentially life threatening response to an infection.

**You must phone 999 as soon as possible if you suspect sepsis.**

Podiatry Department – 0131 536 1627

Patients who are housebound, or reside in a nursing home or hospital ward can contact Podiatry on – 0131 446 4631

**If you are concerned about infection out of office hours you should contact NHS 24 by dialling 111**

**If you suspect sepsis phone 999 straight away and ask, 'is this sepsis?'**