Tissue Viability Team

Can I Help My Wounds To Heal?

Wounds heal more quickly if the right conditions are in place. Poor diet and infection are causes of poor wound healing. This leaflet explains how you can help your wound heal more quickly.

Diet

Try to eat a varied diet and regular meals, unless you are on a restricted or special diet. Foods containing protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals will be particularly useful. Eating well can make a huge difference to your wounds and will encourage them to heal.

- **Protein** can be found in dairy products such as milk, cheese, eggs and also meat, fish, soya, nuts, beans and pulses.

- **Carbohydrates** can be found in potatoes, cereals, bread, pasta and rice. Other sources of carbohydrate are biscuits, sweets, cakes and chocolate. These can be included if your appetite is poor.

- **Vitamin C** can be found in fruit, vegetables, salad and fruit juices.

- **Iron** can be found in red meat, chicken and turkey. Eggs, beans, pulses, fortified breakfast cereals, nuts and green vegetables are also good sources. Iron is absorbed better when a good source of vitamin C is taken at the same time.

- **Zinc** can be found in cereals, fish, and meat.

- **Fluids** are essential to stop the skin from becoming dry and inelastic and therefore more likely to be damaged. You should aim to drink 8-10 cups of fluid per day. Any non alcoholic will provide fluids. Milky drinks will also provide extra calories and protein.

Take advice from the Dietitian, nursing or medical staff if you are unsure as to what you can eat.

If you have a small appetite and you are struggling with meals, you may be advised to eat small meals and snacks between meals. Supplement drinks might be prescribed if necessary, by the doctor or dietitian. Try and drink all of the supplements you are given, they will really help your wound to heal as quickly as possible.
Patient Information

**Mobility**

Keep as mobile as possible in bed and when sitting in a chair. The more mobile you are the less likely you are to get complications such as blood clots, bedsores or chest infections. These can all lead to an increase in the length of your stay in hospital and will further increase your nutritional needs.

**Pain Relief**

Take regular pain relief tablets if you need them. If you are in pain you will not want to move or eat and your rehabilitation will be delayed.

**Infection**

Never touch your wound this can make a wound infection much more likely.

If there are dressings on your wound do not remove them, the ward staff will check them daily and remove them when necessary.

Let the nursing or medical staff know if you notice your wound is oozing and the dressing becomes wet at any time.

Also if you experience an increase amount of pain from the wound, an unusual smell, an increased amount of the ooze coming from the wound or an increase in redness around the wound.

Finally if you have any concerns regarding your wound or any other aspect of your care do not hesitate to speak to the nursing or medical staff looking after you.

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