



Which Product Do I Use?

Karen Huxtable

There are so many to choose from!



So how do we choose?





We need to know:

- How dressings function
- What the ideal wound environment is
- The healability of the wound

Dressings' main role is to
manage moisture





Dressings will:

- Soak up moisture
- Strain/filter moisture
- Retain moisture
- Add moisture

Dressings that soak up moisture are for wet wounds

- Foams
- Alginates
- Hydrofibres
- Gelling fibres
- Vertically wicking



Mesh dressings strain or filter moisture – moist/wet wounds

- Mesh dressings
 - Cuticerin
 - Adaptic
 - Atrauman
- Silicone mesh dressings
 - Mepitel
 - Silflex
 - Duratouch



Dressings that retain moisture are for moist wounds

- **Hydrocolloids**

- Comfeel
- Duoderm

- **Films**

- Tegaderm
- Op-Site



Hydrogels add moisture to dry wounds

- Hydrogels
 - Solosite
 - Intrasite
 - Aquaflo
 - Curafil



Some dressings may also kill bacteria:

- Silver
 - Iodine
 - Honey
 - PHMB
- **AND** either add, retain, absorb or filter moisture



Antimicrobial dressings also modulate moisture

Absorb moisture

- Aquacel Ag
- Iodosorb
- Medihoney
- Acticoat
- Kendall AMD Foam
- Kerlix AMD Gauze
- Mepilex Ag

Filter moisture


- Actilite
- Atrauman Ag
- Acticoat Flex
- Inadine

Add moisture

- Prontosan Gel
- Suprasorb X + PHMB
- SSD cream



A wound formulary can assist
with product choice



Moist Wound Healing: why should tissue be moist?

- Maintains viable tissue – prevents cell dessication
- Reduces pain
- Breaks down slough & necrotic tissue
- Cleans the wound
- Promotes epithelial migration
- Facilitates a pain-free, atraumatic dressing removal

The ideal wound environment that favours healing

- Warm
- Moist
- Slightly acidic
- Free from debris (slough and necrotic tissue)
- Free from disease (low bacterial levels)



Wound bed preparation

- Epithelial cells need moisture and a clean wound bed before they will migrate across a wound
- Dressings are used to alter or maintain the environment depending on what is required





The wound environment will direct dressing choice

- Primary or secondary intention?
- Flat or cavity?
- Dry, moist or wet?
- Clean, polluted or infected?
- Big or small?
- Difficult site?

Primary & secondary intention



Cavity wounds

- Fill the dead space
- “fluff” not stuff
- Alginates
- Hydrofibres (aquacel)
- Gelling fibres (durafibre)



Dry wounds are dead wounds



Moist = viable, dry = dead



Hydrogels will hydrate, debride
and restore viability in dry
(healable) wounds



Polluted rivers breed disease



So do polluted wounds



Wet wounds can cause skin maceration & excoriation

- Wet wounds with slough and bacteria need absorbent antimicrobial dressings and frequent dressing changes



Understand healability



Poor healability


- Dry intact necrotic toes and heel wounds should be kept dry
- This is to prevent bacteria entering the wound and increasing risk of limb-threatening infection



Fungating wounds

- Atraumatic
- Antimicrobial
- Gel if dry
- Vertically wicking and absorbent if wet





How do you know it was the “right” dressing?

- Comfortable insitu
- Easy to remove
- Didn't traumatise the wound or skin
- Provided moist environment
- Prevented maceration
- Reduced odour/bacteria/sloughy tissue



In summary:

- Learn how dressings function
- Assess the healability of the wound
- Use the right dressing function to achieve the ideal wound environment to promote healing and/or quality of life

Nurturing - it's in your hands.

