

# SKIN TEARS

Skin tears are preventable injuries often caused by falls, knocks, and removal of tapes and adhesive dressings. Provide prevention education.

## Patient



Skin tears mostly occur in neonates and older adults due to fragile or dry skin. Twice daily moisturising can reduce skin tears rates by 50%.

## Skin



Underlying health conditions can delay healing and require early specialist nurse or doctor referral. Implement a skin and wound care plan.

## Health



Skin tears are adverse events requiring incident reporting and ACC notification.

Use a classification tool –  
[ISTAP skintears.org](http://ISTAP.skintears.org)  
or  
[STAR woundsinternational.com](http://STAR.woundsinternational.com)

## Tools



## New Zealand Wound Awareness Week 24th–30th August 2020

Awareness, Prevention,  
and Management of  
Skin Tears



## Research

Skin tears are most common in aged care. Preventative strategies are key. Educate clinicians on how to manage skin tears appropriately.



## Infection

Skin tears are painful and can lead to wound infection and delayed healing. Consider tetanus vaccine.



## Dressings

Avoid sutures, staples, and adhesive strips on fragile skin. Low or non-adherent (such as silicone) dressings are recommended. Remove dressings 'low and slow'.



## Resources

Visit [nzwcs.org.nz](http://nzwcs.org.nz) for teaching resources; [nz.doctor.co.nz](http://nz.doctor.co.nz) to download patient skin tears information sheet; and [acc.co.nz](http://acc.co.nz) for falls prevention.