



Wound Healing Essentials

THE FUNDAMENTALS THAT MAKE ADVANCED TREATMENT WORK

GOAL When a wound stalls, reassess the barriers to healing - not just the dressing.

1 PERFUSION & OXYGEN DELIVERY

- Adequate blood flow is essential for healing.
- Non-healing lower-extremity wounds should raise concern for PAD when risk factors or exam findings are present.
- ABI is commonly used; toe pressures / TBI or other testing may be needed when vessels are noncompressible.
- Escalate ischemic warning signs promptly.

2 PRESSURE, SHEAR & OFFLOADING

- Redistribute pressure and reduce shear according to the resident's risk and care plan.
- Offload heels and diabetic / neuropathic pressure points when indicated.
- Check medical devices, footwear, seating and positioning for hidden pressure.
- Reassess when skin changes despite current prevention.

3 MOISTURE BALANCE, EDEMA & WOUND ENVIRONMENT

- Manage drainage so the wound is not excessively dry or macerated.
- Edema can delay healing; address the underlying cause and follow the ordered edema / compression plan.
- Dressing selection should match wound needs, exudate, tissue and the treatment plan.
- Protect surrounding skin from moisture, adhesives, friction and repeated trauma.
- Compression requires attention to arterial perfusion and the resident's overall condition.

4 OTHER HEALING FACTORS

NUTRITION & HYDRATION

Screen for nutrition risk. Encourage nutrient-dense intake and adequate hydration when appropriate; involve dietary services when needed.

INFECTION & SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Diabetes control, infection, smoking, medications, anemia, chronic disease, pain and adherence can all affect healing.

ADVANCED THERAPIES

Debridement, NPWT, cellular / tissue products, ultrasound and other advanced options may help selected wounds - but do not replace the fundamentals.

CLINICAL PEARL

If a wound is stalled, reassess the diagnosis and the barriers to healing - not just the dressing.

STALLED WOUND?

REASSESS PERFUSION / PRESSURE / EDEMA / INFECTION / NUTRITION / PLAN