

Zinc

Zinc is essential for building new tissue. It is a mineral found in all protein foods, especially meats, meat products, chicken, fish, and seafood, milk and milk products.

Drinks

Aim to drink at least a total of eight cups/ glasses of water, milk and/or juice each day.

Am I safe to move around with a wound?

Exercise will not hurt your wound. It is important to move around to ensure you do not develop a pressure ulcer (bed sore).

Taking a gentle walk and doing regular leg exercises will help to increase the blood supply to the wound bed aiding wound healing.

When sitting, elevate the legs to prevent lower leg swelling, making sure the heels are protected from any pressure.

If your wound is on your foot or heel, it is important to wear the correct footwear to aid stability whilst moving around. Your healthcare professional will be able to give advice on this.

This is your wound. It is important for you to take responsibility in helping your wound to heal.

How can I do this?

- Be involved in your plan of care
- Discuss options with your healthcare professional
- Do not feel afraid to raise concerns if you are not happy with any decisions that are made
- Be open to suggestions from healthcare professionals
- Encourage your carer or relative to become involved, if this is appropriate

If you have any concerns regarding your treatment/plan of care, raise them with your healthcare professional who will be happy to discuss alternative options.

Help us get it right

If you have a complaint, concern, comment or compliment please let us know by speaking to a member of our staff. We learn from your feedback and use the information to improve and develop our services.

If you would like to talk to someone outside the service contact the **Patient Experience Team** on **0113 220 8585**, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm or email lch.pet@nhs.net

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages on request.

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How can I help my wound to heal and prevent infection?

Information for patients and carers



How can I help my wound to heal and prevent infection?

How can I prevent infection?

Good hand washing can significantly result in the reduction of potential bacteria on the hands and therefore considerably reduce the risk of cross infection.

- Do not touch the wound yourself.
- Do not allow your visitors to touch your wound/dressing.
- Nursing or medical staff who deal with your wound or dressings should always wash their hands before and after touching your wound.
- If you need to touch your wound/dressing do so minimally and always ensure you wash your hands thoroughly before and after and wear a pair of vinyl gloves.
- Particular attention should be paid to hand hygiene after using the toilet, blowing your nose, smoking and both before/after eating or drinking.

Can I shower?

Please ask your healthcare professional if it is safe to shower.

When showering consider:

- Do not use flannels or sponges on or around the wound area, they have the potential to harbour bacteria which could affect wound healing.
- Do not use scented soaps, shower gels or talc around the wound area.

- Neutral pH balanced skincare products are acceptable. Your healthcare professional will be able to advise further on this.
- Do not rub wounds vigorously with a towel - pat dry gently. Keep a separate towel for drying around your wound and change the towel daily.
- Plain cotton, cool clothing tends to be the most comfortable and should be changed regularly.

Is smoking harmful to my wound?

Smoking increases the risk of wound infection, risk of chest infection/pneumonia and delays wound healing. It can lead to your wound breaking down or opening. Smoking cessation will improve wound healing.

For advice and support on how to quit call 0800 169 4219 or text SMOKEFREE to 60066

Which foods will improve wound healing?

A balanced, nourishing diet is essential for wound healing. The following information is a guide to eating for those with a wound. If your appetite is poor it is important to try and eat 'little and often'.

Essential nutrients include:

Protein

Protein is essential to build new tissue. Try and include it with 2-3 meals a day. Protein includes all meats/meat substitutes i.e. Quorn, fish, nuts, eggs. Milk and dairy foods such as cheese and yoghurt are a source of protein. Including a milky pudding or glass of milk at the end of a meal is a good way to boost protein intake.

Iron

Iron is important for a healthy blood supply to heal your wound. Examples of iron rich foods are all red meats, eggs (well cooked), sardines and pilchards, baked beans, fortified cereals. Drinking a glass of fruit juice will help to absorb the iron. Drinking tea may hinder absorption.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is an essential vitamin for wound healing and building tissue, as well as helping your body absorb iron from your food. It is found in vegetables, salad, and fruit. These must be eaten every day as this vitamin cannot be stored by the body.

Vitamin A

Vitamin A is important for healing and is found in protein foods and all dark green or brightly coloured vegetables and fruit such as spinach, broccoli, peas, apricots, carrots, mango.