Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Supporting a Podiatry Patient and Carers to re-dress a Wound

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Supporting a Podiatry Patient and Carers to Re-dress a Wound

Patient and Carer Information

Community Podiatry Service

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Wound Care

Why do I need a dressing?

Your wound has been dressed in order to encourage healing to take place. It is important that you follow your podiatrist's advice regarding wound care and dressing changes. This will help them to assess the healing process.

How long will the wound take to heal?

Some wounds take longer to heal than others, depending on the severity and location of the injury. If you feel that your wound does not appear to be healing or you have any concerns, please contact your podiatrist or seek alternative medical advice.

What can I do to help my wound heal?

Avoid alcohol as much as possible and stop smoking.

To encourage wound healing, try to eat foods which contain vitamin C and protein; these can be found in fruit, vegetables, chicken, red meat and fish. If you are unable to eat these foods for any reason, a multivitamin tablet may be advised; this will be discussed with your podiatrist.

Can I have a shower?

Yes, you can have a shower, but you need to discuss this further with your podiatrist.

Pain Management

What if my wound is painful?

It can be usual for the wound to be painful. If your wound is painful, it may help to take pain relief 30 minutes before your dressing change.

If you are taking any medication or have a medical condition, you must check with your pharmacist or general practitioner (GP) **before** taking any form of pain relief. This is to ensure that it is safe for you to take.

You may take medicines such as paracetamol or ibuprofen for pain.

As with all medicines, you should always:

- Follow the instructions printed on the label (if prescribed)
- Read the patient information instructions included with the medicine.

If you experience any side effects, you should ask your pharmacist or GP for further advice.

If your wound is still painful, then discuss this with your health care professional or GP, as alternatives may be available for you.

Infection

Why is my wound not being cleaned?

Research shows that cleaning wounds removes the good healing cells on the wound bed (base or open area of the wound); this can delay healing.

Wounds are only cleansed with warm tap water if there is any dressing or wound debris that needs removing. The edges of your wound may be cleaned with warm tap water to remove any wound debris or adhesive from your skin.

How do I reduce the risk of infection?

It is important to reduce the risk of infection:

- Try to keep the dressing clean and dry - you can ask your podiatrist about waterproof dressings for use in the bath or shower.
- If blood or discharge soaks through the dressing, it may need to be changed sooner (please ask your podiatrist).
- Do not touch the wound if there is no dressing in place.
- Dressings may not be required for some types of wounds
- If the wound becomes dirty, please clean with cooled boiled water and ensure the area is dry after cleaning.

Signs of Infection

What are the signs of infection?

If you have any of the following, please contact your podiatrist/ GP immediately.

These may include:

- Increased pain to the wound area
- Redness
- Swelling
- Increased discharge from the wound
- Fever or raised temperature
- Offensive smell from the wound.
- Break in the skin
- Do you feel unwell?

What to do if you are concerned

- Do not wait for a podiatrist to contact you if your condition gets worse or you have any concerns. Seek help / advice from the contact number above or from your General Practitioner (GP). If you feel urgent advice is required, you should go to your local Accident and Emergency Department.

In the event of a medical emergency ring 999

SEPSIS

Sometimes a severe infection can spread into your blood stream and be life threatening; this is called Sepsis. The symptoms of Sepsis can sometimes be mistaken as flu, a tummy bug, or a chest infection. Signs of Sepsis include:

- **Slurred speech**
- **Extreme shivering or muscle pains**
- **No urination in 24hrs**
- **Breathlessness**
- **A feeling that you may die.**
- **Your skin becoming mottled or discoloured.**
- **You may not always experience pain alongside the symptoms above.**

If you have any of the above symptoms of Sepsis, call 111 or go to the Emergency Department (A&E) immediately.

Prescriptions

How do I get my dressings?

Your podiatrist will discuss any dressings or equipment you may need to continue your treatment.

Your GP or podiatrist will arrange a prescription for you.

If you struggle to pay for prescriptions, then a pre-payment certificate for either three or twelve months may be best. You can discuss this with your pharmacist.

Advice on keeping your feet healthy

Check your feet every day.

You should check your feet every day for any blisters, breaks in the skin, pain, or any signs of infection, such as swelling, heat or redness. If you cannot do this yourself, ask your partner or carer to help you.

Wash your feet every day.

You should wash your feet every day in warm water and with a mild soap. Rinse them thoroughly and dry them carefully, especially between the toes. Do not soak your feet, as this can damage your skin. If you are a diabetic, you may not be able to feel hot and cold very well. You should test the temperature of the water with your elbow or ask someone else to test the temperature for you.

Moisturise your feet every day.

If your skin is dry, apply a moisturising cream every day, avoiding the areas between your toes.

Toenails

Cut or file your toenails regularly, following the curve of the end of your toe. Use a nail file to make sure that there are no sharp edges which could press into the next toe. Do not cut down the sides of your nails, as you may create a 'spike' of nail which could result in an ingrowing toenail. You may need to see a podiatrist to cut your toenails if you are a diabetic, please discuss with your podiatrist who can give you advice.

Socks, stockings, and tights

You should change your socks, stockings, or tights every day. They should not have bulky seams, and the tops should not be elasticated.

Check your shoes.

Check the bottom of your shoes before putting them on to make sure that nothing sharp such as a pin, nail or glass has pierced the outer sole. Also, run your hand inside each shoe to check that no small objects such as small stones have fallen in.

Badly fitting shoes

Badly fitting shoes are a common cause of irritation or damage to feet. The podiatrist who assessed your feet may give you advice about the shoes you are wearing and about buying new shoes. They may suggest that you are measured for special shoes you can get on prescription.

Avoid walking barefoot.

If you walk barefoot, you risk injuring your feet by stubbing your toes and standing on sharp objects which can damage the skin.

Minor cuts and blisters

If you check your feet and discover any breaks in the skin, minor cuts, or blisters, cover them with a sterile dressing. Do not burst blisters. If after one day, there is no sign of healing contact your podiatry department or GP immediately (their contact numbers are

over the page). If they are unavailable, go to your local Accident and Emergency department.

Hard skin and corns

Do not attempt to remove hard skin or corns yourself. Your podiatrist may provide treatment or advise you to see a private podiatrist.

Over-the-counter corn remedies

If you are diabetic never use over-the-counter corn remedies. They are not recommended, as they can damage the skin and create foot ulcers.

Avoid high or low temperatures.

If your feet are cold, wear socks. Never sit with your feet in front of the fire to warm them up. Always remove hot water bottles and turn off the electric blanket before getting into bed.

Contact Information

Your podiatrist can be contacted as follows:

Your Podiatrist is called:

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Telephone: 0300 707 7700

Contact Times: 8am – 5pm

Individual advice from your Podiatrist

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Procedure

I have been shown all equipment I need to undertake the dressing change.

I have been shown how to perform the following procedures: it has been explained why these procedures are required and I fully understand the information given:

- Wash my hands and I have been given a hand hygiene leaflet
- How to unfold the dressing pack and open the appropriate dressings
- How to remove the dressing appropriately
- How to apply the sterile gloves avoiding touching the fingers of the gloves
- How to clean the wound and it has been discussed when/if this needs to be done.
- How to apply the appropriate dressings by aseptic technique (including creams/barrier films).
- How to dispose of the waste from the dressing procedure.

Signs and symptoms of infection have been discussed with me, and I understand the information given. I am aware I need to contact a health care professional for advice if these occur.
I have been given a care plan with written instructions and information for dressing my wound.
I will take responsibility for the wound whilst I am dressing it.
I will contact the podiatrist responsible for the overall care if I have any concerns regarding the wound or dressings.

Patient / Cares Name ……

Patients / Cares Signature ……

Podiatrist Print Name:

.....

Podiatrist Signature:

.....

Date treatment plan commenced: ..... ……

Date treatment plan discontinued: .....

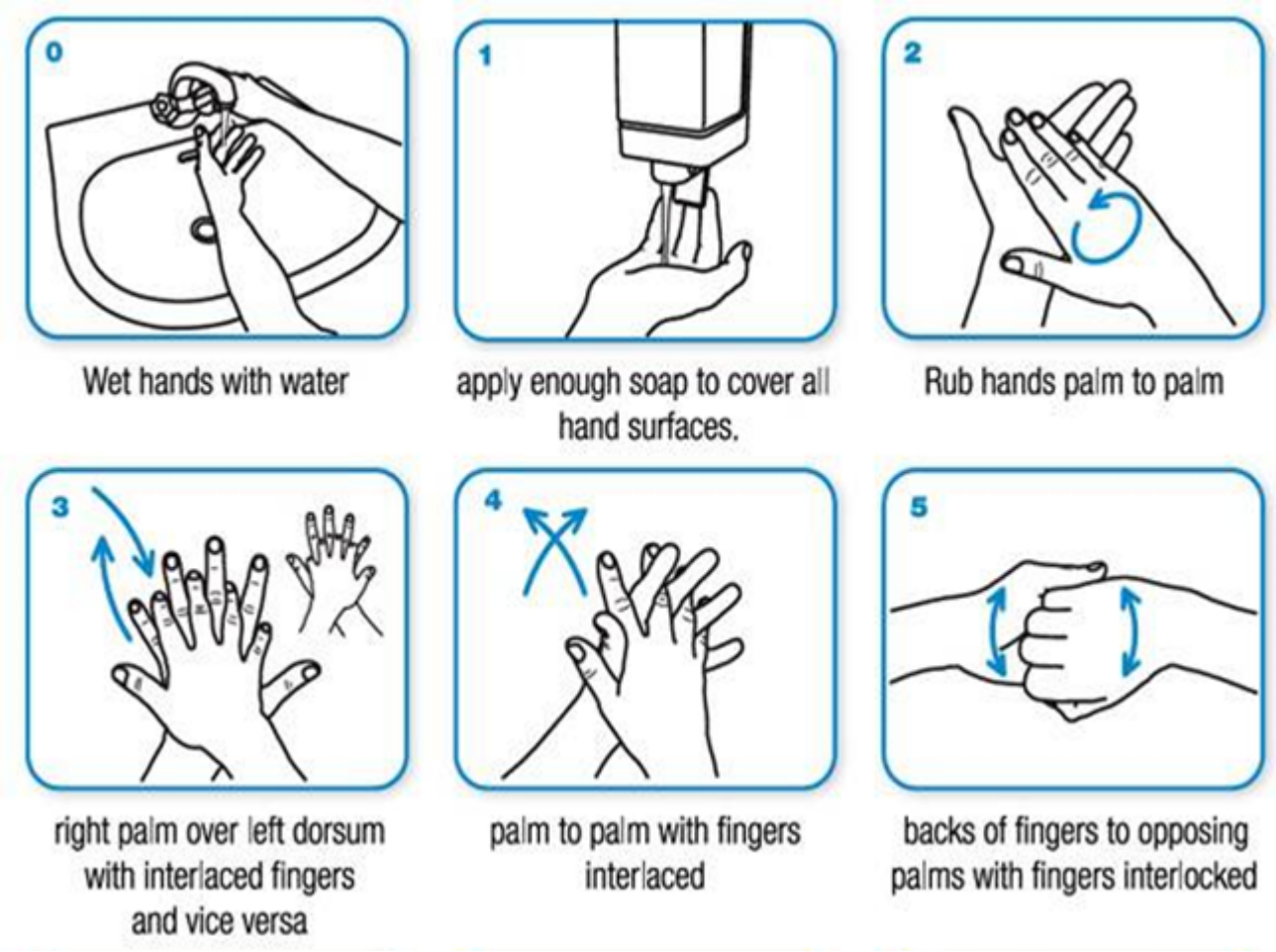
Aseptic hand wash technique

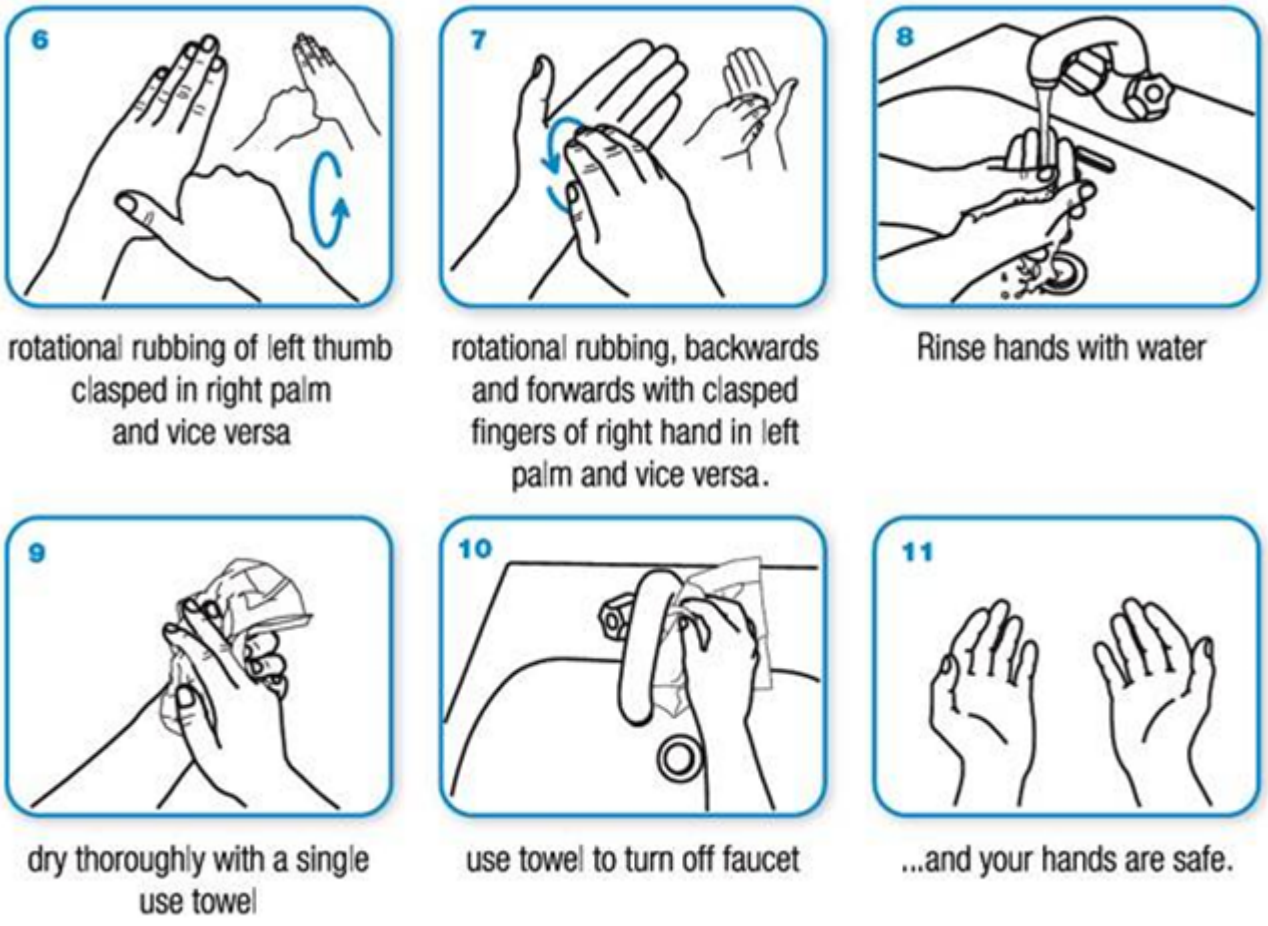
Why do I need to wash my hands this way?

- **The information detailed below shows you how to wash your hands in the most**

thorough way.

- **This step-by-step guide is to ensure you have the least chance of infection getting into your wounds from bacteria or dirt on your hands.**





- **If you have any problems or questions regarding this technique, please contact your podiatrist.**

    - **Open the dressing pack onto the hard clean surface and unfold carefully.**

    - **Open the dressings onto the unfolded dressing pack.**

    - **Put on the plastic apron - included in the dressing pack if you are performing the dressing for someone else.**

    - **Remove the existing dressing from the wound using the plastic bag - included in the dressing pack.**

    - **Wash your hands.**

    - **Put on the sterile gloves, included in the dressing pack, and avoid touching**

the fingers of the gloves.

- **Clean the wound if necessary.**
- **Apply the dressing/s using the aseptic technique - include barrier films, moisturising cream.**

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After applying your dressing:

- **Put all waste from the procedure into the plastic bag that is included in the dressing pack**
- **Wash your hands as shown by your podiatrist**

When to change your dressing

You need to change your dressing on the following days:

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When to attend the clinic

You must attend clinic for review by the podiatrist every (frequency and days):

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Additional Information

Any extra information required – for example other leaflets, such as how to make your meals more nutritious.

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