

Improve my skin



Five things you should know about keeping skin healthy

1 Keeping skin healthy is important for pressure ulcer prevention.

2 Once the skin breaks down, it is at even higher risk for further damage.

3 As people age, the skin changes, making it more vulnerable to damage. It may become dry, paper-thin and itchy.

4 Fluid from incontinence, perspiration and wound fluid can irritate skin and make it more prone to breakdown.

5 Reddened areas, or on darker skin, areas that are darker than usual, may indicate a breakdown is imminent.



GREEN

Where skin is intact and well hydrated:

Inspect skin regularly, prevent prolonged exposure to moisture and manage skin temperature.



AMBER

Skin at risk of breakdown:

Use appropriate products to maintain skin integrity. Select suitable support surface if due to pressure damage.



RED

Skin has broken down:

Document area of damage and assess wound. If the wound is caused by moisture it is more likely to be a moisture lesion. Do not confuse with a pressure ulcer. Ensure you know the difference as all pressure ulcers must be reported (use Safety Cross).

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How to keep skin healthy

1 Too dry

- a. Apply a moisturiser (cream or ointment) regularly to soften the skin, reduce scaling and ease itching. Apply in a downward direction.
- b. Do not use excessive amounts of skin cream.
- c. Skin should be patted dry, not rubbed.
- d. Do not use traditional soaps and avoid creams that can irritate the skin.
- e. Ensure the patient is receiving an adequate fluid intake.

2 Too moist

- a. Use a barrier film or cream to keep fluid away from the skin.
- b. Use a faecal management system if the cause is profuse or prolonged diarrhoea.
- c. Use incontinence products when required.
- d. Use an appropriate surface to manage the skin temperature and humidity.

3 Document all barrier creams/films and topical emollients used and mark on body map.



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