

MALODOUR TERMINOLOGY: GLOSSARY OF USEFUL WOUND CARE TERMS

Alginate Dressing

Alginate dressings are lightweight and derived from algae or seaweed. Alginate dressings are highly absorbent and designed for moderately to heavily exuding wounds. They can assist wound healing by providing a moist healing environment.

Aerobic Bacteria

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Arterial Disease

Arterial disease, sometimes known as peripheral arterial disease (PAD), is when fatty plaque accumulates in the arteries. This build-up causes a blockage or narrowing of the arteries that carry blood to the legs. This can lead to arterial leg ulceration.

Biofilm

Biofilm is a viscous substance that adheres to a surface. It forms when a community of microorganisms, including bacteria and fungi, stick together and grow. The substance allows the microorganisms to communicate and evolve together.

Carbon Dressing

Carbon dressings are designed to manage malodorous wounds. Carbon dressings contain an activated charcoal layer that absorbs the odour from wounds.

Carboxymethyl Cellulose Dressing

Carboxymethyl cellulose dressings derive from natural cellulose sources. These dressings protect the wound bed from external agents that cause infections and pain. These dressings are non-toxic and hypoallergenic.

Chronic Venous Insufficiency

Chronic venous insufficiency is when the valves in the veins are damaged. This means that blood is unable to flow back up to the heart properly. Instead, the blood in the veins begins to flow downward and pool in the lower limbs, especially around the ankles.

Chronic venous insufficiency can cause pain, discomfort, oedema, varicose veins, and leg ulcers.

Debridement	The process of removing dead or infected tissue to aid wound healing. Debridement reduces the risk of infection and malodour.
Dermatitis	Dermatitis is a general term for skin irritation. Dermatitis is usually caused by a reaction to topical products. Symptoms can include dryness, itchiness, redness, and flakiness.
Dermis	The dermis is the middle layer of the skin. It is located between the epidermis and the hypodermis. The dermis is the thickest layer of the skin and is made of elastic and fibrous tissue.
Desloughing	The process of removing slough from within or around the wound. Desloughing can support wound healing.
Elevation	Elevation is one of the mainstays of oedema management. Elevating the limbs above the heart prevents fluid from pooling in the lower limbs, improves venous and lymphatic drainage.
Epidermis	The epidermis is the outermost layer of skin. It is located above the dermis and the hypodermis.
Epidermoid Cysts	Epidermoid cysts are small, non-cancerous bumps that develop beneath the skin. They can appear anywhere on the body and are usually painless. The area around the epidermoid cyst sometimes has a foul smell. The inside of the cyst contains yellowish and malodorous pus.
Exudate	Exudate is a fluid that leaks out of cuts and wounds. Exudate is composed of water, electrolytes, enzymes, proteins, and nutrients. Exudate is sometimes known as pus (see Pus).
Fungating Tumours	Fungating tumours are those that grow to the point of breaking through the skin. Fungating tumours have a crater appearance. They are associated with pain, discomfort, infection, exudate and malodour.

Granulation	Granulation is a critical part of the wound healing process. Granulation is when new blood vessels and connective tissue forms around the edges of the wound bed. The term granulation comes from the word ' <i>granular</i> ,' which describes the appearance of the skin during this process: red, pink, and lumpy.
Infection	A reaction caused by bacteria and viruses invading the body.
Ischaemia	Ischaemia is a condition in which blood flow is restricted to the tissues or organs. This leads to a decrease in oxygen to the affected areas, which can threaten tissue and organ viability.
Leg Ulcer	A leg ulcer is defined as a wound in the lower limbs that takes more than 4 to 6 weeks to heal. Leg ulcers can vary in severity from person to person. Leg ulcers are usually the consequence of comorbidities such as peripheral arterial disease or chronic venous insufficiency.
Maceration	Maceration is the softening and breaking down of the skin, particularly the periwound, because of exposure to moisture.
Malodour	Malodour is defined as an unpleasant or foul smell. Wound malodour is a normal part of the healing process. In other cases, wound malodour can be a sign of infection or a reaction to certain dressings. Malodour can be problematic for clinicians and patients. It can lead to embarrassment, isolation, nausea, and stress.
Lymphorrhoea	Lymphorrhoea is the leakage of lymph through the skin. In most cases, it results in a large volume of fluid being released from the body, which can soil clothes, bedding, and floors.
Necrotic Tissue	Necrotic tissue is dead tissue. Necrosis is usually found in or around the wound bed. Necrotic tissue is not viable and cannot resume cellular function again even if blood flow is increased to the area.
Neoplastic Ulcer	Neoplastic ulcers result from skin cancer.

Oedema	Oedema is the accumulation of fluid in the tissues of the body. Oedema is usually concentrated in one area of the body (i.e., the ankles).
Ostomy	Ostomy is a surgical procedure that creates an opening for a stoma.
Periwound	The periwound is the skin immediately surrounding the wound.
Pseudomonas Aeruginosa	Pseudomonas aeruginosa has a sweet, grape-like odour that appears in certain wounds. The scent is indicative that the wound has become infected with bacteria.
Purulent	Purulent means containing or discharging pus.
Pus	Pus is a fluid that leaks out of wounds and cuts. It is made up of water, enzymes, proteins, nutrients, and electrolytes. It is sometimes known as exudate (see Exudate).
Slough	Slough is considered a by-product of inflammation. Slough is made up of dead skin cells, fibrin, protein, and microorganisms. It is typically a yellow or off-white colour. The presence of slough can increase the risk of infection and malodour.
Superabsorbent Dressing	Superabsorbent dressings are designed to absorb and retain large volumes of exudate and fluid. Many superabsorbent dressings are developed to keep fluid away from the wound bed to maintain adequate moisture balance and prevent maceration.
Venous Leg Ulcer	Venous leg ulcers are chronic and slow-healing wounds that develop on the gaiter area of the legs. Venous leg ulcers are caused by chronic venous insufficiency. They are the most common type of leg ulcer, accounting for more than 60% of all cases.

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