



Skin Tear Assessment Tool

Affix patient Label

Date	
Location of Skin Tear:	
Skin Tear Category: (tick box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Category 1a <input type="checkbox"/> Category 1b – check within 24-48hrs <input type="checkbox"/> Category 2a <input type="checkbox"/> Category 2b – check within 24-48hrs <input type="checkbox"/> Category 3



Category 1a

A skin tear where the edges can be realigned to the normal anatomical position (without undue stretching) and the skin or flap colour is not pale, dusky or darkened.



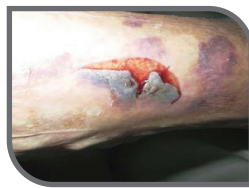
Category 1b

A skin tear where the edges can be realigned to the normal anatomical position (without undue stretching) and the skin or flap colour is pale, dusky or darkened.



Category 2a

A skin tear where the edges cannot be realigned to the normal anatomical position and the skin or flap colour is not pale, dusky or darkened.



Category 2b

A skin tear where the edges cannot be realigned to the normal anatomical position and the skin or flap colour is pale, dusky or darkened.



Category 3

A skin tear where the skin flap is completely absent.

Week 1

Date	Treatment	Date For Next Dressing Change	Initials

Week 2

Date	Treatment	Date For Next Dressing Change	Initials

Week 3

Date	Treatment	Date For Next Dressing Change	Initials

Week 4

Date	Treatment	Date For Next Dressing Change	Initials

If skin tear not healed within four weeks refer for specialist assessment

Note: Dressings should stay insitu for 5-7 days or unless strikethrough 75%



Skin Tear Prevention Guide

Affix patient Label

Definition

A skin tear is a traumatic wound as a result of friction alone or shearing and friction which separates the epidermis from the dermis (partial-thickness wound), or separates both the epidermis and dermis from underlying structures (full-thickness wound). (Payne and Martin 1993)

Risk factors for skin tears:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of previous skin tears | <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple medications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of bruising or discoloured skin | <input type="checkbox"/> Impaired mobility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced age | <input type="checkbox"/> Dry skin/dehydration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor nutritional status | <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of friction, shearing, pressure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive impairment/dementia | <input type="checkbox"/> Impaired sensory perception |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependency | <input type="checkbox"/> Disease processes (renal failure, heart disease, stroke) |

Prevention Strategies:

- Assess/recognize fragile, thin, vulnerable skin
- Use soap-free bathing products to avoid drying the skin
- Apply moisturiser to the skin twice daily
- Use proper lifting, positioning and transfer techniques
- Use caution when bathing and dressing
- Avoid wearing rings that may snag the skin
- Keep fingernails trimmed
- Avoid direct contact that will pull the skin. Use assistive devices such as slide sheets
- Protect fragile skin – use limb protectors and/or use clothing that has long sleeves or pants
- Consider padding or cushioning equipment and furniture. For example, bed rails and wheelchairs to reduce risk of injury
- Use pillows (satin or silk covers help to reduce to the risk of friction and shear) to position people who are less mobile or restricted to bed or chairs
- Avoid using tapes or adhesives. If dressings or tapes are required, use paper tapes or soft silicone dressings to avoid tearing the skin upon removal
- Provide a safe environment
- Optimise nutrition and hydration

References:

- LeBlanc K, et al. International Skin Tear Advisory Panel. *Adv Skin Wound Care* 2013; 26: 459-76
- Lewin G, et al. Risk factors associated with the development of skin tears in hospitalised older persons. *Int Wound J* 2016; 13:1246-1251
- Serra R, et al. Skin tears and risk factors assessment: a systematic review. *Int Wound J* 2018; 15: 38-42
- Carville K, et al. Effectiveness of a twice-daily skin-moisturising regimen for reducing the incidence of skin tears. *Int Wound J* 2014; 11: 446-53
- Rayner R et al. Risk model for the prediction of skin tears in aged care residents. *Int Wound J* 2019; 16: 52-63
- LeBlanc K et al. Best practice recommendations for the prevention and management of skin tears in aged skin. 2018, Wounds International



Skin Tear Management Guidelines

1. Control bleeding
2. Clean wound with warm normal saline, warm water or in shower. Pat dry



3. Realign (if possible) any skin or flap using a moist cotton-tip
4. Assess and document the skin tear using the Skin Tear Assessment Tool
5. Assess the surrounding skin for swelling, discolouration or bruising. If flap colour is pale, dusky or darkened reassess in 24-48 hours or at first dressing change



6. Apply a soft-silicone dressing to wound overlapping the wound by at least 2cm
7. Draw arrows on the dressing to indicate the direction the dressing should be removed and date that dressing was applied
8. Apply a limb protector to prevent further injury
9. Notify the appropriate health professional and document what you have done



10. Leave dressing on for 5 to 7 days or if 75% strike through
11. Remove dressing slowly in direction of arrows, moisten with water for easy release
12. If wound is healed leave open and moisturise
13. If wound has not healed apply a new soft silicone dressing and leave on for 5 to 7 days



Figure 1:
Remove dressing in direction of arrow 5 to 7 days after application or if 75% strikethrough



Figure 2:
Limb protector to prevent further trauma

References:

LeBlanc K, et al. International Skin Tear Advisory Panel. *Adv Skin Wound Care* 2013; 26: 459-76

LeBlanc K et al. Best practice recommendations for the prevention and management of skin tears in aged skin. 2018, Wounds International



Skin Tear Alert sticker

for progress notes

SKIN TEAR ALERT

Resident name:

Date

Time

Location of skin tear:

Skin Tear Category: (tick box)

Category 1a	Category 1b	Category 2a	Category 2b	Category 3
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Treatment:

Incident report Completed: (tick box)

Yes

No

Date of review

Signature: