



**This is a guide only and does not
replace clinical judgment**

References:

NPUAP, EPUAP, PPIIA. Prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers, Haesler E (Ed). Cambridge Media: Osborne Park WA. 2014.

Wounds Australia. Standards for Wound Prevention and Management, 3rd Ed. Cambridge Media: Osborne Park, WA. 2016.

NHMRC, 2013. Australian Dietary Guidelines. Canberra: NHMRC.

Posthauer M et al. The Role of Nutrition for Pressure Ulcer Management: NPUAP, EPUAP, PPIIA White Paper. Advances in Skin & Wound Care, 2015. 28:175-190.



60 Musk Ave
Kelvin Grove Qld 4059
Brisbane, Australia

Phone: + 61 7 3138 6000
Email: ihbi@qut.edu.au
Email (Wound Healing): woundresearch@qut.edu.au

CRICOS No. 00213J

www.qut.edu.au/ihbi

This project was funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under the Encouraging Better Practice in Aged Care (EBPAC) program.



Nutrition and Wound Healing

Information for health professionals



© QUT 2019 24353



Nutrition and Wound Healing

Good nutrition and hydration is essential for wound healing

- Older adults are more likely to be malnourished
- A wound increases energy and nutrient needs
- Dehydrated skin is less elastic, more fragile and more likely to breakdown

Assessment

- Use a validated nutritional screen for all clients with, or at risk for, a wound
- Refer those found at risk of malnutrition to a dietician for further assessment
- Risk factors for poor nutrition include:
 - poor dentition or difficulty swallowing
 - poor mobility
 - reduced appetite and taste changes
 - cognitive impairment, pain and/or depression
 - loss of independence

Signs of poor nutritional and/or hydration status:

- unintentional weight loss
- poor appetite
- nausea or vomiting for three days or more
- dry, fragile skin
- loss of skin integrity or a new wound
- deterioration of an existing wound

Management

- Ensure adequate nutritional intake and hydration to address any deficits and promote wound healing
- Provide high calorie and protein supplements if nutrition needs are not met by usual diet
- Provide high protein, arginine and micronutrient supplements for those with a Stage III or IV pressure injury, whose nutrition needs are not met by the methods above
- Provide extra fluids for those with, or at risk of dehydration (e.g. fever, vomiting)

Prevention

- Promote optimal nutritional status
- High protein supplements may help prevent pressure injuries in those at high risk
- Refer those at nutritional risk to a dietician

Ways to promote good nutrition and hydration

- Encourage a healthy, balanced diet including the five food groups: bread/grains, fruit and vegetables, dairy products, protein, and fats
- Encourage six–eight glasses of fluid/day
- Provide assistance with meals if needed and allow sufficient time
- Ensure good oral and dental care
- Position upright for eating/drinking
- Provide a pleasant mealtime environment

Which nutrients are important for wound healing?

Protein: Good sources include meat, fish, dairy products, legumes, nuts, seeds and grains

Vitamins and minerals: Good sources include fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and cereals, dairy products and protein foods