



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

**** The role of nutrition in people with burns
requires specialist input and is not included in
the scope of this brochure***



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Nutrition and Wound Healing

Information for health professionals



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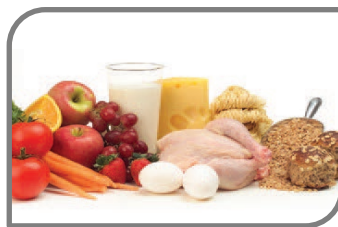
Nutrition and Wound Healing

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 break down

Assessment

- Screen and document nutrition status using a validated, age-appropriate tool for all people with, or at risk of, a wound
- Assess nutritional content of food and fluid intake
- 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 or depression
 - loss of independence



Signs of poor nutritional and/or hydration status:

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

Management and Prevention

- 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, high calorie, arginine and micronutrient supplements for those with pressure injuries who are, or who are at risk of, deficiencies or malnourishment
- Provide extra fluids for this with, or at risk of, dehydration (e.g., fever, vomiting)



Ways to promote good nutrition and hydration

- Encourage a healthy, balanced diet including the five food groups: bread/grains; vegetables & fruit; dairy products; protein and fats
- Encourage recommended fluid intake, as appropriate to the person's condition
- Provide assistance with meals if needed and allow sufficient time
- Ensure good oral and dental care
- Position upright for eating and 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

Studies have shown wound healing benefits from Vitamin C, Vitamin D, folic acid, zinc, and omega-3 supplements.

Good sources include fruit, vegetables, wholegrains and cereals, dairy products and protein foods.