

Documentation should provide enough information to:

- Monitor progress in wound healing
- Evaluate the effectiveness of management
- Guide management and prevention plans



This is a guide only and does not replace clinical judgment



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# Wound Assessment

Information for health professionals



# Wound Assessment

## What is a wound?

A wound is an injury to the skin or underlying tissue that may or may not involve a loss of skin integrity. Physiological function of the tissue is impaired. Common types include leg ulcers, traumatic wounds, pressure injuries, surgical, and burns.

## Phases of wound healing

1. Haemostasis (bleeding stops): 10 minutes
2. Inflammation (redness, swelling): 3 days
3. Proliferation (new tissue growth): 28 days
4. Maturation (regaining normal function): a year or more

## Factors promoting wound healing

- A moist healing environment
- Adequate blood supply and oxygenation
- Stable temperature
- Good nutrition and hydration
- Treatment of underlying medical conditions
- Avoiding pressure, shear, friction, maceration
- Avoiding smoking



## Wound Assessment

Evaluate and document the following:

- A comprehensive assessment of physical, medical, psychosocial, wound history, nutrition and pain (include a validated pain scale)
- **Cause**, site, type and classification of wound
- **Depth**: superficial, partial or full thickness
- **Dimensions, shape, area** - on first presentation, then regularly
- **Wound edge**: sloping, punched out, raised, rolled, undermining, purple, calloused
- **Wound bed**: necrotic, sloughy, infected, granulating, epithelialisation
- **Exudate**: serous, haemoserous, purulent
- **Surrounding skin**: oedema, cellulitis, colour, eczema, maceration, capillary refill time
- **Signs of infection**: heat, redness, swelling, pain, odour, delayed healing, deterioration of wound, purulent exudate
- **Pain**: associated with disease, trauma, infection, wound care practices, products
- **Progress in healing**: assess regularly



## Is the wound healing?

### ✓ Yes, signs of a healing wound:

- Pink or ruddy red in colour
- Small to moderate amounts of clear or serous exudate
- Wound is decreasing in size
- Surrounding skin is warm, pink and healthy

### ✗ No, signs of an unhealthy wound:

- Malodour
- Green, yellow, slough or necrotic tissue
- Large amounts of exudate
- Increased size or no decrease in size
- Surrounding skin is red, hot, swollen
- Increased pain
- Systemic signs and/or symptoms of infection

**An acute wound that has not healed after 28 days needs investigation**