

Films: Opsite IV3000, Tegaderm, Mepore

Advantages

- Allows some moisture vapor to be evaporated from wound
- Impermeable to liquids and bacteria
- Reduces pain by keeping nerve endings moist
- Allows inspection of wound through dressing

Disadvantages

- Non-absorbent – exudate may pool at wound site causing maceration
- Not suitable for moderate to high exuding wounds
- If not correctly removed, then may be traumatic to wound tissue

Hydrogels: SoloSite, Solugel, Intrasite

Advantages

- Provides a moist wound environment for cell migration
- Absorbs exudate
- Rehydrates eschar and acts as an autolytic debriding or desloughing agent whilst not harming granulating or epithelializing cells
- Reduces pain by keeping nerve endings moist
- Fills dead space in deep wounds and conforms to cavity
- Easily irrigated from the cavity

Disadvantages

- Should not be used in blind sinuses where the extent of the tracking cannot be identified
- Will require a secondary dressing
- Maceration of the surrounding skin may occur with the liberal use of gel
- Some people may experience a sensitivity to the preservative agents used in these products

Hydrofibre Dressings: Aquacel

Advantages

- Maintains a moist wound healing environment as fibers convert to a firm gel on contact with exudate
- Vertical and controlled lateral wicking of exudate reduces maceration of peri-wound skin
- Can be used on infected wounds (Aquacel Ag)
- More absorbent than alginate dressings
- Promotes non-traumatic dressing removal

Disadvantages

- Similar in appearance to alginate dressings which may lead to confusion as it does not have the haemostatic properties of calcium alginate
- Requires a secondary dressing

Hydrocolloids: Comfeel, Duoderm, Cutinova Hydro

Advantages

- Hydroactive particles absorb wound exudate
- Gel formation at wound surface provides moist wound environment
- Water repellent
- Conforms well to wound and body surfaces
- Reduces pain by keeping nerve endings moist
- Hydrocolloid interactions clean and debrides the wound by autolysis
- Safe debridement, granulation and epithelialization can occur in wound at the same time

Disadvantages

- Not recommended on wounds clinically infected with anaerobic bacteria
- Use with caution on fragile or compromised skin surrounding wound as adhesive may damage fragile skin
- Gel may be mistaken for wound infection
- Deep wounds require cavity filling paste, powder or dressing
- May be difficult to keep in place in areas affected by friction eg. Heels
- Edges may roll (can tape to prevent this)

Calcium Alginate Dressing: Kaltostat

Advantages

- Provides a moist wound environment
- Keeps nerve endings moist so reduces pain
- Low allergenic
- Biodegradable in wounds
- Absorbent and therefore useful in exuding wounds
- Promotes haemostasis in bleeding wounds

Disadvantages

- Will require secondary dressing
- Gel may be confused for pus or slough in wound
- Not suitable on dry wounds or in the presence of hardened eschar
- Not suitable with an occlusive dressing when wound is infected with anaerobic bacteria

Foams

Allevyn – Adhesive and Non-Adhesive, Biatain – Adhesive and Non-Adhesive, Aquacel Foam

Advantages

- Available as adherent or non-adherent
- Facilitates a moist wound environment
- Highly absorbent
- Provides protection
- Conforms to uneven body surfaces

Foams (cont)

Disadvantages

- Moist wound environment may not be sufficient to allow autolysis to occur

Tulle Gras Dressings: Jelonet, Adaptic

Advantages

- Reduced adhesions and allows non-traumatic removal
- Provides a moist wound environment that facilitates epithelial cell migration

Disadvantages

- Does not absorb exudate
- Will require secondary dressing
- Cotton products can shed fibres into wound
- Can be difficult to remove from deep cavity wounds
- Can cause allergic reactions in sensitive people

Island Dressings: Primapore, Opsite, Mepore

Advantages

- Suitable for wounds healing by primary intention and/or low exudating wounds
- Non-adherence contact layer so no wound trauma on removal
- Some have a occlusive, waterproof or water resistant outer layer

Disadvantages

- Not suitable for highly exudating wounds
- Some are not waterproof (Primapore)
- Not recommended for clients with allergies to adhesive agents

Non-Adherent Dry Dressing

Melonin, Exu-Dry, Telfa, Mesorb

Advantages

- Suitable for epidermal wounds
- Low adherence film therefore prevents shredding of fibres into wound
- Non traumatic removal if exudate is minimal

Disadvantages

- If large amounts of exudate, dressing may stick and dry out, therefore can be traumatic removal
- Needs a secondary dressing

Dry Dressings: Gauze, combine, cotton wool

Advantages

- Absorbent and protective
- Provides a dry wound healing environment where appropriate

Disadvantages

Dry Dressings: Gauze, combine, cotton wool (cont)

- Creates a dry wound
- Not the 'ideal' dressing
- Can shed fibres in the wound which act as foreign bodies
- Granulation tissue can grow into the mesh of the dressing
- When strike through occurs it can allow a pathway for pathogens into the wound

Odour Absorbing Dressings: Carbonet, Lyofoam

Advantages

- Absorbs bacteria and eliminates odour
- Absorbs exudate
- May be used as primary dressings

Disadvantages

- May need a secondary dressing
- Do not cut as carbon particles may leak into wound and if sealed edges, the integrity of the dressing will be compromised

Hypertonic Saline Impregnated Dressings

Curasalt, Mesalt

Advantages

- Recommended for moist, necrotic, draining and infected wounds
- Promotes a cleansing effect on exudating and malodorous wounds,
- Reduces odour
- Maintains a moist wound healing environment
- Promotes autolysis of loos slough or eschar
- Absorbs exudate and bacteria
- Will reduce wound oedema
- May be effective in reducing hypergranulation tissue

Disadvantages

- Can cause discomfort or stinging sensations
- The dry formulations are not recommended for dry wounds or hardened eschar
- Not recommended for wounds with actual or potential bleeding
- Not recommended on exposed tendon, bone or muscle
- Should be discontinued in healthy granulating or epithelizing wounds
- For optimal effects, the dressing will require changing 2-3 times per day
- Will require a secondary dressing

Cadexomer Iodine Medicated Dressings: Iodosorb

Advantages

- Conform to wound bed
- Absorbs exudate 6-7 times its weight
- Converts to a gel and promotes moist wound healing
- Iodine is progressively released at the wound surface

Disadvantages

- Contraindicated for clients with sensitivity to iodine products or in clients with Hashimoto's thyroiditis, Graves disease or very large wounds
- Not recommended in pregnant women, lactating mothers or children aged 2 years or younger
- The maximum single application is 50g and weekly maximum must not exceed 150g
- Treatment duration should not exceed 3 months in any single course of treatment
- Will require a secondary dressing

Silicone Dressings: Mepitel, Mepilex

Advantages

- Minimizes wound trauma on removal
- Conforms to different anatomical shapes

Disadvantages

- Not recommended for persons with allergies to silicone products

Silver Dressings: Aquacel Ag

Advantages

- Silver is a broad spectrum antimicrobial and is effective against MRSA and VRE

Disadvantages

- Should be used prudently as there is some concern that inappropriate use will lead to increased resistance

Wound Honey: Medihoney

Advantages

- Promotes moist wound healing
- Promotes autolytic and osmotic debridement
- Has an antimicrobial activity and is especially effective against Pseudomonas and Staph aureus bacteria
- Controls malodour

Disadvantages

- To be avoided in persons with known allergies to bee products
- Best stored at <30 degrees C and not exposed to light
- Can cause some stinging sensations
- Can lead to maceration
- Requires a secondary dressing

Negative Pressure Therapy Devices

V.A.C. dressings

Advantages

- Provides a moist wound environment
- Reduces bacterial colonization
- Promotes localized blood flow
- Reduces localized oedema
- Reduced dead space in the wound as foam is cut to the shape of the wound
- Promotes granulation and epithelization
- Facilitates collection of wound exudate
- Reduces the need for frequent dressing changes

Disadvantages

- Contraindicated when necrotic eschar is present, untreated osteomyelitis and malignant wounds. Do not place VAC dressing on exposed blood vessels, organs, non-enteric or unexplored fistulae, use with caution on enteric fistula
- Caution is required for bleeding wounds or potential bleeding due to anticoagulant medication
- Requires a power source
- Requires specialized dressing and canister attachments