

How To Help Your Wound Heal

Nutrition

Good nutrition is important to help your wound heal.

- Eat well-balanced meals.
 - Try to eat protein every time you eat. Protein helps repair and build healthy tissue.
 - Protein is found in many foods including meat, dairy, eggs, soy, nuts and beans.
- You can have one to two nutritional supplements each day to increase your protein intake. Examples include:
 - Boost[®], Ensure[®] or Sustacal[®]
 - Carnation[®] Instant Breakfast[®]
 - Sport Shake[®]
 - whey protein powder.

If your appetite is poor, having two to three nutritional supplements each day is good to help promote healing.

- Drink at least six to eight 8-ounce cups of water each day
- Your health care provider may recommend that you take a multivitamin or continue to take your prenatal vitamins.
- Your health care provider may recommend that you start taking vitamin C and fish oil each day.

If you are already taking these supplements, they may recommend that you increase the amount you take each day.

Skin Care

- Wash the area around your wound with mild soap (such as Dove[®]) each day. It can help destroy bacteria.
- Do not take really hot or really cold showers.
- Check the skin around your wound each day. Please tell your nurse if you have any of the following:
 - rash
 - redness
 - pain
 - new breaks in the skin
 - irritation from the tape.

Hygiene

Good hygiene is the most important way to protect against infections.

- Wash your hands before and after you change your dressing
- Put clean gloves on before you take off your dressing.
- Throw away any supplies that get dirty or wet.
- Keep dressings in original packages and store in a clean, dry area.

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Abdominal Binder or Belly Band

An abdominal binder or belly band provides support to your abdominal area. This can help your wound heal faster. If you would like to use one of these items, you can buy one at most drugstores.

When to Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have:

- a temperature higher than 101 F
- chills
- signs of infection at your wound site:
 - increased pain
 - swelling
 - redness
 - odor
 - warmth
 - sudden increase in drainage
 - green or yellow discharge.

Preparing for Your Nurse's Visit

- Take off your soiled dressings and take a shower just before your nurse arrives. The packing from the dressing may stay in the wound or fall out when the outer dressing is removed. This is OK.
- Cover the wound with a dry dressing to protect the area until your nurse arrives to change your dressing
- Place the soiled dressings in a separate plastic bag and save for your nurse to look at. After the visit, the bag can be tied off and thrown in the household trash.