

SKIN INSPECTION & CARE

FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF DEVELOPING WOUNDS;
AND THEIR CAREGIVERS



Why skin care matters

Good skin care helps prevent new wounds and protects existing ones.

Checking the skin regularly can help you spot problems early and act before they get worse.

What to Look For

Check the skin every day (twice a day if it is very dry or very moist).

Look for:

- Dry, flaky skin
- Redness or colour changes
- Darker or lighter patches on darker skin
- White, soft skin (from too much moisture)
- Fluid or discharge on the skin
- Itching
- Any cuts, sores, or damage



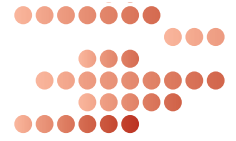
Pay special attention to these areas:

- Heels, hips, and buttocks
- Skin folds (under breasts, groin, armpits)
- Between the toes
- Where there were wounds before



SKIN INSPECTION & CARE

FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF DEVELOPING WOUNDS;
AND THEIR CAREGIVERS



Page 2 of 3

How to Care for the Skin

- Use a gentle cleanser (pH close to skin, around 5).
- Avoid strong soaps or products that dry the skin.
- Choose creams and cleansers that do not irritate the skin (non-ionic or amphoteric surfactants).
- Apply moisturizing cream twice a day if advised.
- Always take the person's preferences into account.

Special Situations

- Very dry skin: Do not wash with regular soap and water. Use a gentle cleanser with lipids (skin-friendly oils), pH 4–5.

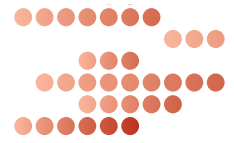


- Incontinence-associated dermatitis (IAD):
 - o Clean the skin gently every day and after each episode with a no-rinse cleanser (pH 5.5).
 - o Pat dry (do not scrub).
 - o Apply a protective barrier cream (zinc oxide, petrolatum, dimethicone, or other skin sealants).



SKIN INSPECTION & CARE

FOR PEOPLE AT RISK OF DEVELOPING WOUNDS; AND THEIR CAREGIVERS



- Intertrigo (red, sore skin in folds):
 - o Clean gently with a no-rinse cleanser.
 - o Pat dry carefully.
 - o Apply a protective barrier cream.
 - o Watch for signs of fungal infection (for example extreme redness, lesions with pustules and satellite lesions without response to the standard treatment).

Page 3 of 3

When to Contact a Healthcare Professional

- If you notice skin changes that do not improve with daily care
- If new wounds or sores appear
- If you have any doubts about your wound care

Remember:

Even small changes in the skin can turn into serious wounds if ignored.
Early care makes a big difference.

References:

Lichterfeld A, Hauss A, Surber C, Peters T, Blume-Peytavi U, Kottner J. Evidence-based skin care: A systematic literature review and the development of a basic skin care algorithm. *J Wound, Ostomy Cont Nurs*. 2015;42(5):501–24.

Surber C, Kottner J. Skin care products: what do they promise, what do they deliver. *J Tissue Viability* [Internet]. 2017;26(1):29–36. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jtv.2016.03.006>

Lichterfeld-Kottner A, El Genedy M, Lahmann N, Blume-Peytavi U, Büscher A, Kottner J. Maintaining skin integrity in the aged: A systematic review. *Int J Nurs Stud*. 2020 Mar;103:103509. doi: 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2019.103509. Epub 2019 Dec 23. PMID: 31945604

Fastner A, Hauss A, Kottner J. Skin assessments and interventions for maintaining skin integrity in nursing practice: An umbrella review. *Int J Nurs Stud* [Internet]. 2023;143:104495. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2023.104495>