

A Harm Reduction Guide to Wound Care

OK: Watch



Caution: Get Checked



Stop: Get Urgent Care



Care for the wound and monitor:

- Keep wound clean and covered
- Wash your hands before care
- Clean wound every day by rinsing well with tap water or saline
- Avoid scrubbing or touching the wound- it can slow healing
- Cover wound with a bandage
- Change bandage if it is wet or dirty

See a healthcare provider to check for infection.

If the skin or wound changes:

- **Hot:** feels hot
- **Painful:** hurts more
- **Red:** edges are red or bleeding
- **Odour:** smells bad or different
- **Fluid:** more liquid or green/ yellow pus
- **Bigger:** wound or red skin is growing
- **Swollen:** more puffy

Get urgent healthcare if:

- **Fever-** chills or temperature above 38 degrees Celsius
- **Hot and red skin-** bigger than 2cm around wound (size of a nickel)
- **Red streaks-** painful reddish lines coming from wound or red stripes up skin. *may be hard to see on darker skin tones

Antibiotic Tips

- Only take antibiotics that are prescribed for you
- Do not share prescribed antibiotics
- Do not save your antibiotics for a different infection

Untreated severe wounds can cause serious complications like **amputation** and **blood infection (sepsis)**

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