

Aseptic Dressing Technique

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Introduction

Three principles of aseptic dressing technique

- Maintain asepsis
- Expose the wound for the minimum time
- Employ an efficient procedure

Preparation of Patient



Explain the procedure, to gain consent and co-operation.

Draw screens around the bed and ensure adequate light. Clear the bed area, close windows, turn off fans, etc.

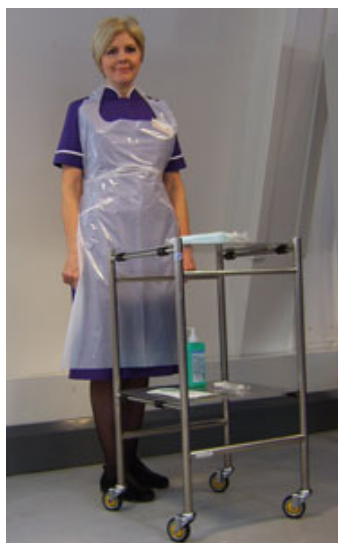
Adjust bedclothes to permit easy access to the wound but maintain warmth and dignity.

Assess the wound dressing.

Check patient comfort, e.g. position, convenience, need for toilet, etc.

Administer analgesics as appropriate and allow time to take effect.

Preparation of Nurse



Consult the care plan to determine the type of dressing required, frequency of change, etc.

Make sure hair is tied back securely.

Wash and dry hands thoroughly.

An apron should be worn. Additional protective clothing may be necessary if indicated by the patient's condition.



Preparation of Equipment

You would need:

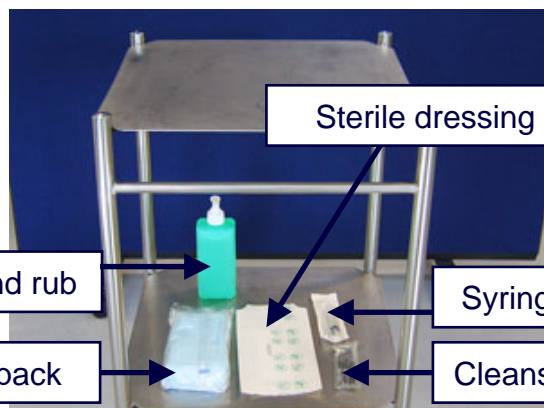
- Dressing trolley or other suitable surface
- Dressing pack, syringe (for irrigating the wound), cleansing solution and new dressing according to the care plan/local policy
- Alcohol hand-rub or hand washing facilities

Clean the Surfaces



Clean the trolley or other appropriate surface according to local policy

Equipment



Gather the equipment, check the sterility and expiry date of all equipment and solutions. Place these on the bottom of the trolley or somewhere convenient

Procedure

Take the trolley to the bed area.

Adjust the bed to a safe working height to avoid back strain.

Opening Dressing Pack

- Remove the dressing pack from its outer packaging, place it on the clean trolley/surface.
- Using your fingertips and touching the edges of the paper only, open the pack and lay it flat to create a sterile field. Visit www.cetl.org.uk/learning for tutorial with video of these steps.

To watch video of these steps go to www.cetl.org.uk/learning 'tutorials' page

Arranging the contents

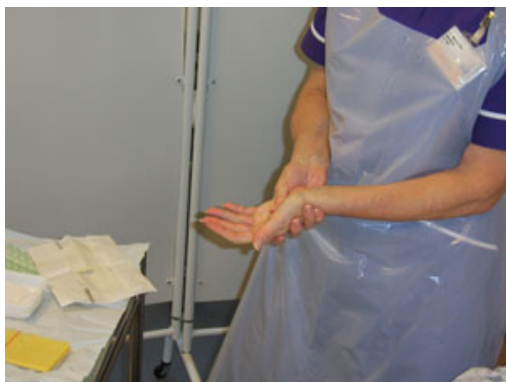
- Remove the yellow waste bag and place it to one side.
- Touching only the wrist part of the gloves (or edge of glove pack) move them to the edge of the sterile field.
- Taking care not to contaminate the sterile field, carefully pour the cleansing solution into the tray.
- Open the dressing, syringe, etc., onto the sterile field.

Loosen Dressing



Adjust any remaining bedclothes to expose the wound, then loosen the existing dressing but do not remove it

Disinfect hands



Disinfect hands. Ensure your hands are completely dry before proceeding.

Remove old Dressing



Open the yellow waste bag and put your hand inside so that the bag acts as a glove. Use this to remove the soiled dressing

Inspect Dressing

Inspect the dressing to determine the type and amount of exudate.



Dispose of Old Dressing



Turn the bag inside out so that the dressing is contained within it

Attach the Waste Bag



Use the self-adhesive strip to attach the bag to the side of the trolley or other convenient place close to the wound

Put on Sterile Gloves



Taking care not to touch the outside of the gloves, put on the sterile gloves



Take your right hand glove in your left hand and place ...

Sterile Gloves



...more than half way up and over your right hand



Take the cuff of your left hand glove with your right hand and...



... put your left hand fingers inside the glove



Adjust the gloves over your hands...

Sterile Gloves



... while maintaining sterility

To watch video of these steps go to www.cetl.org.uk/learning 'tutorials' page

Clean around the Wound



Use a gauze swab dipped in cleansing solution to clean **around** the wound to remove blood, etc.

Irrigate Wound



If the wound itself needs cleaning, use a syringe primed with solution in one hand and a gauze swab on the skin below the wound in the other.

Making sure that neither the syringe nor gauze come into contact with the wound, allow the solution to flow into the wound, collecting the solution in the gauze swab held below the wound.

Dry around Wound



Use fresh gauze swabs to dry **around** the wound (not the wound itself)
Use each swab once only and swabbing away from the wound

Apply new Dressing



Peel off the backing paper and apply the new dressing.

Waste bag



Wrap all used disposable items in the sterile field



and place in the waste bag



Remove gloves and discard into waste bag

Waste bag



Use adhesive strips to seal bag

Post Procedure: Make Patient Comfortable



When the dressing is secure, make the patient comfortable and assist the patient as necessary into a comfortable position. Readjust the bed to a safe height. Replace bed rails if necessary

Post Procedure: Dispose of Waste



Dispose of the waste bag in clinical waste.

Post Procedure: Wash hands



Remove apron and wash hands. Return any unused items to the stock cupboard and clean the trolley according to local policy

Post Procedure: Documentation



Document the care given and the condition of the wound.
Report any changes or abnormalities.

Conclusion

As with all aspects of nursing, if you are a student **it is vital that you are supervised** until deemed competent to perform aseptic dressing technique alone.

Remember also to check your local policy regarding cleansing solution and types of dressing used etc.

We hope you have found this programme interesting and informative. To test your knowledge go to www.cetl.org.uk/learning 'test yourself' page.

Recommended reading

Baxter H. Management of surgical wounds. *Nursing Times* 2003, **99** (13): 66, 68.

Collier M. The elements of wound assessment. *Nursing Times* 2003, **99** (13) 48-49.

Dealey C. *The care of wounds: a guide for nurses*, 2005; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Dearden C, Donnell J, Donnelly J, Dunlop M. Traumatic wounds: cleansing and dressing. *Nursing Times* 2001, **97** (28): 50,52.

Johnstone C, Farley A, Hendry C. The physiological basis of wound healing. *Nursing Standard* 2005, **19** (43): 59-65.

Morris D, Ward K. Perioperative nursing in Brooker C, Nicol M. *Nursing Adults; the practice of caring* 2004; Edinburgh: Mosby Elsevier.

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Wilson J, *Infection control in clinical practice, 3rd edition.* 2006 Ballière Tindall Elsevier: Edinburgh.