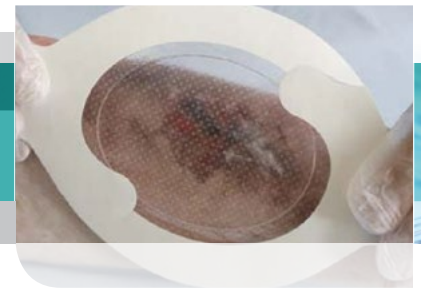


# Skin Tear Protocol



## Definition:

A skin tear is the result of shearing, friction or blunt trauma resulting in separation of the skin layers. A skin tear can be partial-thickness (separation of the epidermis from the dermis) or full-thickness (separation of the epidermis and dermis from underlying structures).<sup>1</sup>

### Low to Moderate Exudate

1. Control bleeding. Cleanse the skin tear and surrounding skin with normal saline or 3M™ Wound Cleanser.
2. For skin tears with attached skin flap present, approximate wound edges.
3. Apply 3M™ Cavilon™ No Sting Barrier Film to the periwound skin. Allow to dry.
4. Apply 3M™ Tegaderm™ Absorbent Clear Acrylic Dressing.
5. Change dressing if leaking or lifting off, if there is drainage under adhesive border, or per facility protocol.

### Moderate to Heavy Exudate

1. Control bleeding. Cleanse the skin tear and surrounding skin with normal saline or 3M™ Wound Cleanser.
2. For skin tears with attached skin flap present, approximate wound edges.
3. Apply 3M™ Cavilon™ No Sting Barrier Film to the periwound skin. Allow to dry.
4. Apply 3M™ Tegaderm™ Silicone Foam Border Dressing or 3M™ Tegaderm™ High Performance Foam Non-Adhesive Dressing, secured with 3M™ Coban™ Self-Adherent Wrap or 3M™ Kind Removal Silicone Tape. Change the dressing every 3–5 days.

#### Note:

- 3M™ Tegaderm™ Alginate Dressing may be applied under foam dressing to manage excessive drainage.
- 3M™ Tegaderm™ Alginate Ag Silver Dressing maybe used with critically colonized skin tears.

## ISTAP Skin Tear Classification<sup>2</sup>



Type 1: No skin loss



Type 2: Partial flap loss



Type 3: Total flap loss



## Skin Tear Prevention Strategies<sup>1,2</sup>

To help reduce the risk for patients determined to be at high risk for skin tear development, implement appropriate skin tear prevention strategies, including:

1. Assess for risk upon admission.
2. Implement a systematic prevention protocol.
3. Encourage residents to wear long sleeves, long pants or knee socks.
4. Provide shin guards for those individuals who experience repeat skin tears to shins.
5. Ensure safe patient handling techniques and equipment/environment.
6. Involve individuals and families in preventive strategies.
7. Educate patient, staff and caregivers on strategies to prevent skin tear development.
8. Consult dietitian to ensure adequate nutrition and hydration.
9. Keep skin well lubricated by applying hypoallergenic moisturizer at least two times per day.
10. Protect individuals at high risk from trauma during routine care and from self-injury.
11. Pad equipment/furniture (bed rails, wheelchair, etc.).

<sup>1</sup> International Skin Tear Advisory Panel: A Tool Kit to Aid in the Prevention, Assessment, and Treatment of Skin Tears Using a Simplified Classification System(C), *Advances in Skin & Wound Care*, October 2013, Vol 26 No 10, pp 459–476.

<sup>2</sup> Skin Tears: State of the Science: Consensus statements for the prevention, prediction, assessment and treatment of skin tears. *Advances in Skin & Wound Care* 2011; 24(9)(Suppl 1):2–15.

For more information, please contact your 3M Critical & Chronic Care Solutions representative, call the 3M Health Care Customer Helpline at **1-800-228-3957**, or visit us at [www.3M.com/C3SD](http://www.3M.com/C3SD).



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