



Right Care

Exudate Pathway



FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT EXUDATE PRODUCTION

WOUND HEALING STAGE

- Inflammatory phase
- Static or delayed healing
- Autolytic debridement

LOCAL

- Local infection / Inflammation / Trauma
- Foreign body
- Oedema
- Sinus and / or fistula
- Sensitivity

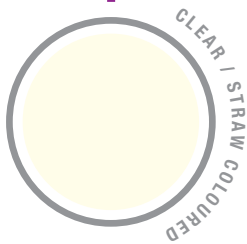
SYSTEMIC

- CCF, Renal and Hepatic failure
- Infection / Inflammation
- Medication (NSAID, Steroids)
- Obesity / Malnutrition

PRACTICAL

- Wound position
- Concordance
- Inappropriate dressing choice

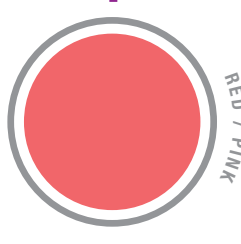
ASSESS EXUDATE COLOUR



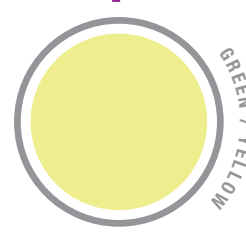
- Considered Normal
- Lymphatic / Urinary fistula



- A response to inflammation
- Possible infection



- Post operative
- Traumatic dressing removal
- Possible infection



- Bacterial infection
- Pseudomonas aeruginosa



- Presence of infection
- Liquefaction of necrotic tissue

ASSESS EXUDATE VISCOSITY

THIN AND WATERY

LOW PROTEIN CONTENT

- Venous or cardiac disease
- Malnutrition
- Urinary, lymphatic or joint fistula

ASSESS EXUDATE ODOUR

- Remove necrotic tissue if clinically indicated
- Reduce bioburden and manage underlying infection
- Review frequency of dressing change
- Sometimes dressings may produce a characteristic odour

HIGH PROTEIN CONTENT

- Infection and/or inflammatory process
- Necrotic material
- Enteric fistula

THICK AND SOMETIMES STICKY

ASSESS EXUDATE LEVELS



DRY

- No visible moisture
- Not an ideal wound healing environment
- May be ideal for ischaemic wounds (consider vascular referral)
- Consider hydrating eschar
- Consider potential dressing adherence
- Surrounding skin may be scaly, atrophic and hyperkeratotic

- **Film**
- **Hydrogel**
- **Hydrocolloid**



MOIST

- An ideal wound healing environment
- Dressing may be lightly marked
- Wound bed could appear glossy
- Reduce dressing change frequency
- Surrounding skin may be intact and hydrated

- **Adhesive Foam**
- **Non Adhesive Foam**
- **Contact Material**
- **Absorbent Clear Acrylic**



WET

- Dressing may be extensively marked
- Potential fragmented areas of maceration
- Consider appropriate peri-wound protection
- Select dressing with appropriate fluid handling properties

- **Adhesive Foam**
- **Non Adhesive Foam**
- **Alginate**
- **Absorbent Clear Acrylic**
- **No Sting Barrier Film**



SATURATED

- Free fluid is visible
- Primary dressing is wet and strikethrough may occur
- If exudate escapes and /or frequent dressing changes are required, use high fluid handling capacity dressing
- Risk of macerated /denuded peri-wound skin
- Use appropriate peri-wound protection

- **Adhesive Foam**
- **Alginate**
- **Super Absorber**
- **No Sting Barrier Film**



LEAKING

- Free fluid is visible
- Dressings are saturated, with exudate leaking from primary and secondary dressings
- High risk of extensive peri-wound maceration
- Super absorbency products are necessary
- Use appropriate peri-wound protection

- **Super Absorber**
- **Topical Negative Pressure***
- **No Sting Barrier Film**

Guideline users should be mindful that, as with any clinical guideline, recommendations may not be appropriate for use in all circumstances. Clearly a limitation of any guideline is that it simplifies clinical decision-making processes and recommendations (Schiffer & Ullrich, 1997).

Any alteration in exudate levels and characteristics may indicate a change in wound status and as such wound management should be reassessed as necessary.

***CONSIDER:** If your primary treatment aim is to manage high volumes of exudate consideration should be paid to the treatment options available. Topical Negative Pressure is an effective but costly treatment option that is designed to manage and treat complex situations. Superabsorber dressings may provide a more cost effective treatment, if the objective is to manage exudate.

Please also consider whether your chosen dressing is suitable for use under compression therapy, if required.



DRY



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Film Dressing**



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Hydrocolloid Thin Dressing**



**3M™ Cavilon™
No Sting Barrier Film**



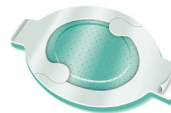
MOIST



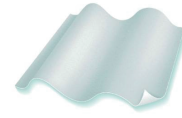
**3M™ Tegaderm™
Foam Adhesive Dressings**



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Foam Non Adhesive Dressings**



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Absorbent Clear Acrylic Dressing**



3M™ Tegaderm™ Contact



**3M™ Cavilon™
No Sting Barrier Film**



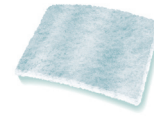
WET



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Foam Adhesive Dressings**



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Absorbent Clear Acrylic Dressing**



3M™ Tegaderm™ Alginate



**3M™ Cavilon™
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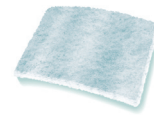
SATURATED



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Foam Adhesive Dressings**



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Superabsorber Dressing**



3M™ Tegaderm™ Alginate



**3M™ Cavilon™
No Sting Barrier Film**



LEAKING



**3M™ Tegaderm™
Superabsorber Dressing**



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No Sting Barrier Film**

Referencing material:

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