

# ***PROCEDURE***

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ORIGINAL DATE: 09/02

REVISION DATE:

05/13

**SUBJECT:     HYDROCOLLOID DRESSINGS**

**PURPOSE:**     To provide a moist healing environment for clean, superficial wounds with minimal exudate.  
                  To protect against infection.  
                  To facilitate autolytic debridement.  
                  To prevent development of pressure ulcers.  
                  To protect skin from friction.

## **Considerations**

Hydrocolloid dressings are synthetic, adherent and available in different sizes. Most hydrocolloids consist of a top layer containing carboxymethylcellulose and pectin and an adhesive layer containing a mixture of polymers. For specific dressing content and instructions related to using the hydrocolloid of choice, consult the package insert. Regular thin and extra thin hydrocolloids are available. The hydrocolloid chosen should match the wound characteristics and purpose of wound dressing. Hydrocolloids should not be used on infected wounds since it is an occlusive dressing.

## **Supplies/Equipment**

Clean gloves, wound cleansing or irrigation supplies; hydrocolloid dressing which is large enough to cover the wound, exceeding the wound margins by at least 2 cm.; clean scissors to be used if the dressing needs to be cut to fit a particular area; plastic bags for disposal of old dressing; clean towel to dry the skin after cleansing.

## **Procedure**

1. Follow clean technique procedure for assessment and treatment of the patient including dressing change.
2. Carefully remove and discard old dressing. After hand washing, don appropriate personal protective equipment.
3. Cleanse or irrigate the wound according to the physician's order.
4. Dry the surrounding skin and assess the wound.
5. Warm the hydrocolloid in the hand to increase activity of the adhesive.
6. Remove the backing from the adhesive layer of the dressing and apply in a rolling motion. Place the dressing such that 1/3 of the dressing is above the wound and 2/3 is below the wound. This will maximize absorbency and wear time. Smooth the dressing in place. Hold the dressing in place for a few seconds to improve adhesion.
7. Discard all disposable materials in the plastic bag, assure that it is discarded in a second plastic bag according to HHVNA policy.
  
8. Clean reusable materials.

9. Document findings and update plan of care as necessary.
10. Follow-up: Change dressing every 3-5 days or if leakage of exudate occurs, according to physicians order.

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***Reference(s):***

1. Thomas, S., Hydrocolloids, Journal of Wound Care, 1992; 1; 2, 27-30
2. [www.worldwidewounds.com/1998/April/Hydrocolloid FAQ](http://www.worldwidewounds.com/1998/April/Hydrocolloid%20FAQ)
3. Wound Education & Research Group, Monash University, [www.vcp.monash.edu](http://www.vcp.monash.edu)