Wound Basics
What is a wound?

- ‘Breakdown in protective function of the skin, loss of continuity of epithelium, with/without loss of underlying tissue’  (Wounds UK)
- ‘Compromised integrity of tissue, caused by an act or disease’
- ‘injury to body, usually involves laceration / breaking of a membrane (e.g. skin), and/or damage to underlying tissues’

(M-W Medical Dictionary)
Types of wounds

Acute / Chronic

- Traumatic wounds
  - Blisters
  - Bruises
  - Abrasions
  - Lacerations / Skin tears
  - Bites
  - Stab wounds
  - Gunshot wounds
  - Degloving injuries
  - Compound fractures
  - Amputations
Thermal injuries
  - Burns / electrical injuries
  - Frostbite
Chemical injuries
  - Acid and alkaline burns
Iatrogenic wounds
  - Radiation injuries
  - Surgical incisions
  - Laser treatment
Chronic wounds
  - Pressure areas
  - Venous leg ulcers
  - Arterial leg ulcers / Mixed leg ulcers
  - Diabetic foot ulcers
  - Malignant and fungating wounds
Basal Cell Carcinoma
- Pearly or waxy lump, may have telangiectasia, or a well defined red patch
- Scaly, dry
- Can be shiny, pale or pink
- May be ulcerated

Squamous Cell Carcinoma
- Thickened red scaly area
- Unhealed sore
- Area is sore /tender
Process of wound healing

Vascular response = within 10 minutes

Inflammation = approximately 3 days

Proliferation = approximately 28 days

Maturation = up to a year or more
## Factors affecting wound healing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General patient conditions:</th>
<th>Local factors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Health status</td>
<td>✓ Decreased blood supply</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Haemorrhage</td>
<td>✓ Local oxygen levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Nutritional status</td>
<td>✓ Infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Age</td>
<td>✓ Maceration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Diabetes</td>
<td>✓ Pressure, friction, shear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Body build</td>
<td>✓ Temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Drugs/medication</td>
<td>✓ Foreign bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Psychological state</td>
<td>✓ Loss of sensation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Holistic and Patient Focused

- “whole” not “hole”
- individual risk factors
- individual circumstances
Further information

Wounds Australia  www.woundsaustralia.com.au
International Wound Infection Institute  www.woundinfection-institute.com
National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)  http://www.nice.org.uk/
EWMA Consensus Documents  http://ewma.org/english/position-documents.html
Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)  http://www.sign.ac.uk/
Wounds International  http://www.woundsinternational.com/clinical-guidelines
Registered Nurses Association of Ontario  http://www.rnao.org/
The Joanna Briggs Institute  http://joannabriggs.org/
Wounds UK  http://www.wounds-uk.com/

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References

www.woundsaustralia.com