Let's Talk ABOUT...

A hydrocolloid (hide-row-CALL-oid) dressing is a bandage used on some wounds. The outer layer is water-resistant, and the inner layer forms a moist healing environment next to the wound.

Do not apply hydrocolloid dressings to third degree burns, wounds with a thick dry scab, or infected wounds. An infection may have these features: redness, warmth (fever), or pus. If you notice any of these, call your doctor.

How do I change a hydrocolloid dressing?

You will need a new dressing, a pair of clean scissors and normal saline.

- 1 Remove the old dressing first. To remove a hydrocolloid, apply normal saline to loosen the edges. Normal Saline is a salt water solution. Talk to your health care provider to obtain normal saline. Gently ease the dressing off.
- 2 Clean the wound with more normal saline. There will be material that looks like pus on the wound, but it is not pus. It is a reaction between the wound and the dressing and part of normal healing.
- Cut the new hydrocolloid dressing ½ inch larger than the wound area.
- Remove the paper backing from the hydrocolloid dressing.
- Gently place the new dressing over the wound, pressing on the edges.

Hydrocolloid dressing

What should I do to make sure my child's wound heals properly?

- Keep the hydrocolloid dressing on the wound until the skin completely heals.
- Change the dressing every 5 to 7 days, when there is leakage from the dressing, or when the dressing is soiled.
- Try to keep your child from putting pressure on his wound as much as possible. If the wound is on a part of your child's body that he uses often (for example, the back, head, hip), a pressure relief device, such as a special mattress overlay, may be helpful. Talk to the wound care nurse for more information.
- Every week, measure the size of the wound. This will let you know if the wound is healing and how fast it is healing.
- Remember, your child must always eat well and have enough fluids, but this is especially important when he needs to heal.

Where can I get hydrocolloid dressings?

You can find these bandages at any local medical supply store. If they are not in stock, the store can always order them. It generally takes 5 to 7 days to receive the order.



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