Enzyme Debriding Dressing

This type of dressing is used to loosen or remove dead skin tissue from your wound. Removing the dead skin tissue is called debriding. The enzyme debriding ointment is spread only on the dead tissue in the wound. The rest of the wound will be covered with saline gauze and then a dry dressing.

If your wound is very deep or you have spaces that open under the skin or tunnel around your wound, you will need to put dressing into those spaces. This is called packing and it helps keep the space drained and allows it to heal from the inside out. Without the packing, the space may close off to form a pocket and not heal.

You will be using collegase ointment, sold by the brand name of Santyl ointment, as the debriding ointment.

You need to change your dressing one time each day.

Follow These Steps

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds. Rinse with warm water and towel dry.

2. Clean your work space using a paper towel, warm water and soap. Rinse with water on another paper towel. Use a clean dry paper towel to dry.

3. Gather your supplies:
   - Non sterile gloves
   - Collagenase ointment (Santyl)
- Cotton tipped swabs, like Q tips or tongue depressor stick for putting enzyme on dead skin tissue in wound
- Gauze pads
- Gauze packing tape, like Nugauze or pads if needed for packing wound
- Large dressing pad, 5 x 9 or ABD pad
- Roll of gauze if needed
- Paper tape
- Plastic trash bag
- Scissors if needed
- Normal saline
- Small clean bowl or dish to use to hold dressings to be wet

4. Put on gloves.

5. Remove the old dressing. If you had packing tape, be sure to remove all of the packing. If the dressing is sticking to healing skin and tissue, wet it with water before you remove it so it does not damage the healing tissue. Place the old dressing and packing in the plastic trash bag.

6. Remove your gloves and throw them in the plastic trash bag.

7. Wash your hands again.

8. Clean the wound with sterile saline. Pour saline on a gauze pad and wipe wound gently or use a squirt bottle or syringe with saline solution to clean wound.

9. Check the wound for signs of infection. Call your doctor or nurse if you have:
   - Skin around the wound is red, swollen, or feels hot
   - Wound smells bad
   - Pus drainage
   - Temperature above 100.5 degrees F

10. Open the dressing packages on your work space. This should include:
   - Gauze packing tape or pads you will wet with saline to pack your wound if needed
- Dry gauze pad(s) for large wound to fill the wound space and hold wet gauze in place
- Large pad to cover the wound dressings
- Any antimicrobial agent that is ordered – Do not use products with iodine or silver with this ointment. Iodine or silver will cause the ointment not to work.

11. Pour saline into the clean bowl or dish to wet the dressings.
12. Put a small amount of the enzyme ointment on a cotton swab or tongue depressor stick.
13. Apply the enzyme only to the dead or dying tissue in your wound in a thin layer about as thick as a nickel coin. It needs to be applied that thick or it will not work. Toss the swab or stick into the plastic trash bag when done.
15. Place the dressing and packing in bowl with saline to wet them.
16. Squeeze out the dressing so they are not dripping. The Santyl ointment needs to be kept moist or it will not work.
17. Place the wet gauze in the wound. If you need to pack open spaces under your skin or tunneled spaces in your wound, use the wet gauze packing tape or open out the wet pads and loosely place the packing in the spaces. You may need to use a cotton swab to pack the small spaces. Refer to handout, Wound Packing.
18. Be sure the wet gauze is not on the healed skin around your wound because it may damage the skin.
19. If the wound is large, place dry gauze to hold it in place and fill the wound space.
20. Cover the wet gauze with the dry large pad.
21. Tape the edges of the pad with paper tape to hold it in place.

or

If you need to use a roll of gauze to hold the dressing in place, start to wrap from the side that is most away from your heart. So if this is a wound on your leg, start closest to your toes and wrap toward your knee or hip. The wrap should not be too tight. Tape the end of the gauze to hold it in place.
22. Put your supplies away.
23. Wash your hands again. Rinse and towel dry.

**Stop using the dressing:**
- When your wound is healed. Apply a moisturizing lotion to your healed skin.
- If you have a rash or local irritation from the dressing.

**Cautions**
- If you have extra dressings that were wet, throw them away. You will not be able to keep the wet dressing for the next dressing change because it can increase your risk of infection.
- Keep the enzyme ointment out of the reach of children.
- Store the ointment at room temperature. It should not be stored in temperatures over 77 degrees F.
- Do not use products that contain lead, silver, or mercury as they may prevent the ointment from working.
- Do not use Santyl near your eyes.
- Avoid use if you have had an allergic reaction to this product.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.