Wound care is done to clean your wound and apply a new dressing. When you do your wound care, it is a good time to check how your wound is healing or if there are signs of infection.

Do your wound and skin care _____ time(s) a day / week.

Steps for wound care:
1. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. Rinse and dry. Dry with paper towel.
2. Clean your work area with soap and water.
3. Gather your supplies:
   - non-sterile gloves
   - sterile normal saline for cleansing (if needed)
   - scissors (if needed)
   - gauze sponges or pads
   - gauze wrap
   - paper tape
   - trash bag
4. Set up your supplies on your work area.
5. Put on non-sterile gloves.
6. Remove old dressings:
   - Cut off dressings with clean scissors or unwind the outer wrap.
   - Remove the gauze.
   - If the gauze is stuck, wet the gauze with tap water and then remove it. You do not want to cause bleeding and damage your healing skin.
   - Remove gloves and throw them in the trash.
   - Throw out the old dressing in the trash.
7. Wash your hands again.
8. Start the shower. Be sure to check the water temperature before getting into the water. The water temperature should feel comfortable to your skin. If the water is too hot it will injure your healing skin.
9. Wash your hair. Then wash all healed skin with one wash cloth and soap. Start at your head and work toward your toes. Clean your genitals (private parts) last.
10. Use a second wash cloth and soap to wash all your wounds. Be gentle so you do not further injure your healing skin. If you cause bleeding, you are washing too hard. A little bleeding is normal. Make sure creams are cleaned off the wounds.
11. Rinse your body and hair well with tap water.
12. Get out of the bathtub or shower. Dry yourself. Use one towel for healed skin. Use the second towel for unhealed wounds and pat the wounds dry.
13. Check your wounds for signs of infection. These signs include:
   • Foul smelling drainage
   • Redness
   • Swelling
   • Increase pain

   **Call your doctor or nurse right away if you have any of these signs.**

14. Gently remove crusty scabs and loose pieces of skin with your towel. If the wounds start bleeding, **stop**.

15. Apply your dressing as ordered.

16. Put a gauze dressing over the cream or dressing on your wound if needed.

17. Hold the dressing in place with a gauze wrap if needed.
   • Roll the gauze wrap loosely around the dressing.
   • Overlap the gauze wrap about ½ inch
   • Start wrapping at the distant part of your body and wrap towards the center of your body. For example, start at your hand and wrap towards your shoulder, or start at your foot and wrap towards your hip.

18. Apply moisturizing cream or other lotion to healed skin.

19. Clean up your work area.
   • Put dressing supplies away.
   • Clean your work area, bathtub, shower or sink with scouring powder or bleach.
   • Clean the scissors with alcohol.
   • Put dirty clothes, towels, and wash clothes in the laundry.
   • Throw out the trash. Remove the plastic liner and take trash to the garbage can or dumpster.
   • Wash your hands.

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