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nationwidechildrens.org

DRESSING CHANGE: CLEAN WOUND

Dry, sterile gauze dressings (bandages) are used to protect wounds and prevent infections. All items needed to care for your child's wound must be kept as clean as possible. Good handwashing should be done before and after changing the dressing. If the dressing change will be uncomfortable for your child, the doctor may suggest a pain medicine to be given about a half-hour before you change the dressing.

A young child can better understand what you are going to do if you let him play "change the dressing" on a doll before you change his dressing (Picture 1).

DOCTOR'S ORDER

- Change the dressing and clean the wound with (solution)_____. Do this _____(times per day).
- Put (name of medicine) _____ on the wound _____ (times per day).

YOU WILL NEED

- Cleansing solution_____
- Cotton swabs
- Gauze squares, size_____
- Paper bag
- Roller bandage, if needed
- Adhesive tape
- Small, clean glass or paper cup

HOW TO CHANGE THE DRESSING

Explain to your child what you are going to do.

1. Wash and rinse your hands well.
2. Pour a small amount of cleansing solution into a clean glass or cup (Picture 2, page 2). Recap the bottle.
3. Gently but firmly remove the old dressing. If the dressing sticks to the wound, pour clean cool water from a clean glass onto the dressing to loosen it.
4. Clean the wound from the inside to the outside of the wound with cotton swabs moistened with cleansing solution (Picture 3, page 2). Throw the swabs away. Then clean around the wound with fresh swabs.



Picture 1 Let your child practice on a doll.

HOW TO CHANGE THE DRESSING, continued

5. Look at the wound to see if it is healing (see *When to Call the Doctor*, below).
6. If your doctor ordered medicine to be put on the wound, apply it with cotton swabs.
7. Open the package of gauze squares. Cover the wound with gauze squares (Picture 4).
8. Tape the edges of the gauze to the child's skin. (If the wound is large or difficult to tape securely, wrap a clean roller bandage over the gauze to hold it in place (Picture 5). Tape the end of the roller bandage.
9. Throw away the used cleansing solution. Store all supplies out of children's reach.
10. Wash your hands. Then comfort your child.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

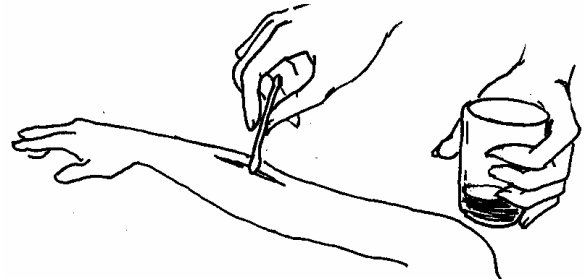
Call your child's doctor if any of the following occurs:

- Drainage from the wound.
- If the skin around the wound feels hot to the touch.
- Redness or swelling around the wound.
- Any foul odor from the wound.
- Your child has a fever over 101° F by mouth or 102° F by rectum.
- If the wound had sutures (stitches) and they are coming out.

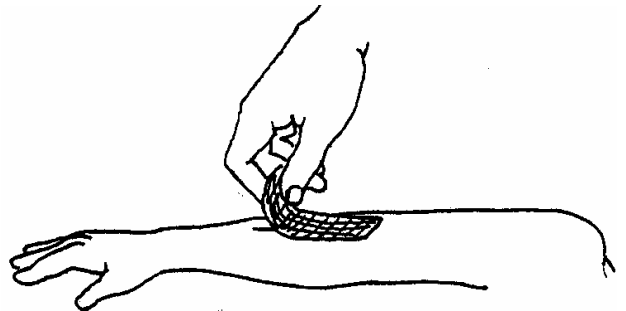
If you have any questions, be sure to ask your doctor or nurse, or call _____.



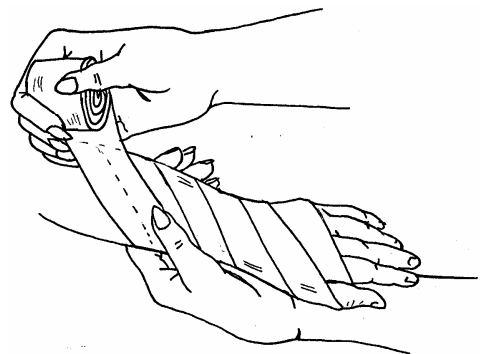
Picture 2 Pour cleansing solution into a clean glass.



Picture 3 Clean the wound with cotton swabs.



Picture 4 Put a gauze square over the wound.



Picture 5 Wrap large wounds with a roller bandage.