Packing a Wound

Your nurse or doctor will show you how to do this dressing change. Look at the wound closely each day and check for tunnels or spaces that need to be packed with the dressing.

Change your dressing ________________________ times a day.

1. Gather your supplies.
   - Gauze for packing
   - Gauze squares to cover packed wound
   - Saline
   - Tape
   - Scissors
   - Tweezers
   - Q-tips
   - Plastic bag
   - Other ______________________

2. Wash the table where you will put your supplies.

3. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds; Dry well with a clean towel.

4. Remove the old dressing. If the dressing sticks, pour saline over it and gently remove it. Dab excess saline with dry gauze. Put old dressing into a plastic bag, and toss in the garbage.

5. Wash your hands again.

6. Pour saline into the wound to rinse it out.

7. Measure the gauze to pack into the wound. Use only one piece of gauze; **always cut more gauze than you think you will need.** However, a healing wound needs less and less gauze. You may be using less gauze every time you pack the wound. Wet the gauze with saline and wring out any excess. It should be as wet as a damp sponge with no dripping.

   Other ____________________________________________________________________

   ____________________________________________________________________
8. Loosely place the gauze into the wound. **Do not overfill the wound.** Use a cotton swab to place the dressing into tunnels or deep spaces and tuck extra gauze into the wound. The wound needs to be filled completely, but gently. Be sure to have a little gauze sticking out when you are done so the gauze does not get stuck or lost in the wound. All wound surfaces need to be covered.

9. Place gauze squares over the wound and tape it to hold everything in place.

10. Wash your hands.

**When to Call the Doctor**

- Temperature greater than 100.4°F by mouth for 2 readings, 4 hours apart
- Increased tenderness or swelling
- Pus or foul smelling wound drainage
- Redness spreading from the wound
- Change in the color of the clean wound to green, black, brown or white

**Phone Numbers**

______________________Clinic (608) _____- __________ 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Mon.-Friday

After hours, weekends or holidays: **(608) 263-6400**
Ask for the doctor on call for Dr. ___________________________.
Leave your name and phone number with area code. The doctor will call you back.

Toll Free: **1-800-323-8942**