

### For All Types of Wounds

Do you want to know the key to preventing skin breakdown or healing a skin ulcer should one occur? While the body does its best to prevent injury with its protective covering of skin it also can heal a skin ulcer or wound. Your job is to **create the best possible environment** so your body can do what it needs to prevent a wound from forming or close a wound that's already there.

#### WHAT CAN I DO MYSELF?

Sometimes you can do it yourself (DIY) when it comes to managing your health and/or making lifestyle choices. For example, you might:

- make small, easy changes that then become regular habits
- continue to do what you're already doing if it's working for you
- become aware of something you are not doing that you need to do, and then doing it



#### THE KEY RULE

**The body cannot heal a wound until whatever has caused it is removed—no matter what else you do or do not do!** It's important to know that sometimes there may be more than one cause for the presence a wound or for being at risk for one, such as pressure and arterial disease. In this case the DIY approach can be very challenging. Using a pro or a team of pros is definitely the best way to go!

#### WHEN DO I CALL IN A PRO?

Sometimes DIY is not enough, and you will need help. You may need to call in a professional such as your doctor, dietitian or other specialized health-care professional when DIY fixes won't make enough of a difference or are too hard to do on your own.



### **CAN I DO ANYTHING TO PREVENT PROBLEMS?**

Yes! Some of the most important ways to prevent wounds and/or create a good healing environment are to:

- Prevent wounds from occurring by protecting skin from bumps, scratches, pressure, heat and toxic substances
- Eat well, rest well and hydrate properly
- Manage—on your own and with your pro—health conditions and lifestyle choices that may contribute to skin trauma or affect healing, such as diabetes, poor circulation, drug or alcohol abuse and lack of exercise
- Remove the cause of a wound that does occur—such as a tight-fitting shoe or repeated scratching
- Look for signs that the wound is healing such as a decrease in size, redness, swelling or pain and continue doing what you're doing; it's working!
- Look for signs that the wound may be infected, such as an increase in redness, swelling or pain and call in the pro to treat the infection right away

In this series we've taken the latest best practice evidence and pared it down to the most essential rules for preventing or treating various wounds. We've also outlined when it's a DIY project and when you need to call in the professionals to help.

### **WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

Another set of free resources, called the [Care at Home series](#), may also be of interest to you.