

Dressing a wound

When returned home, you need to learn how to manage the change of the surgical dressing, so to keep the wound clean and prevent infections.

First of all, prepare all necessary things, to avoid to move if you lack something.

Let's analyse in the detail what you need.

1. Disposable vinyl gloves are a good safety device to wear during the medication, but they are not compulsory.
2. Disinfectant is compulsory. There are different types and each of them can be used; at the chemist's you can buy a common product, such as hydrogen peroxide or another product with iodine base, or any other disinfectant for skin.
3. To disinfect you can use sterile gauze compresses or cotton pads; you can buy them both in supermarkets and at chemist's.
4. Medicated plaster or medication ready-to-use are very practical to cover the wound. You can find them sterile packaged at chemist's.
5. You also need a waste bin: when you remove the dirty dressing, you have to throw it away soon to prevent dangerous materials scattering in the environment. You must not move in your house to throw it away; better to keep a garbage bag close to you when dressing the wound, throw the dirty dressing in it and take care to eliminate it after having firmly closed the bag.

Now let's pass to the real dressing. You should have someone to help you. He/she should help you in this way:

before starting each step, wash your hands carefully. Hands are the best vehicle for the transmission of infections. Wash your hands and your wrists

with water and soap at least for three minutes, then dry them up carefully: it is the best way to prevent infections. Remember to do it each time!

By your well cleaned hands, remove the old dressing, pulling it with care but quickly. If the gauze pads are attached to the wound, moisten them with disinfectant and wait for some minutes.

Removed material has to be thrown away in the close waste bin.

Now take a cotton pad from its edge, moisten it with the disinfectant preventing to touch the bottle; rub carefully the wound with movements from its centre toward its edges. This prevents the germs from the healthy skin arrive to the wound.

When you have finished this step, proceed with a second cotton pad to dry the wound up. Drying process is a very important phase because if the skin rests wet, new dressing could peel off.

Now you can stick the new plaster taking care it adheres and covers the whole wound.

The waste disposal is the last phase before you can consider 'the change of the surgical dressing' definitely completed.