

Victorian Adult Burns Service

Outpatient information for patients

Managing burn wound exudate

About this leaflet

Burn wounds require moisture to heal and exudate is part of the normal wound healing process. This leaflet provides information regarding what to expect, how to manage wound exudate as part of your dressing regime at home, and when you should seek further advice.

Burn wounds may have a lot of exudate in the initial days after injury

Burn wounds may exudate or ooze fluid in the first 3-5 days after injury due to the effects of inflammation. Some strikethrough of exudate or wound fluid may occur. If the external dressing becomes wet from wound fluid, or it oozes out, the dressing should be changed.

Wound exudate should reduce over time

Over time as inflammation subsides and the burn heals, the amount of wound exudate should reduce. It may be necessary to change the type of dressing product used to meet the changing moisture needs of the wound, as different types of products can either add or absorb degrees of moisture. Speak with your healthcare provider for advice.

If wound exudate increases

If wound exudate does not reduce, or increases at any time during the process of healing, it may indicate a sign of infection. Speak with your healthcare provider for advice. The type of dressing product may also need to be changed.

When to contact a health care provider:

Seek medical attention urgently

If you develop a fever (temperature of 38C or above) and you feel unwell

Consult your healthcare provider

If you get increased wound redness, swelling, pain, large volumes of oozings, a smell from the dressings.