

Be Wound Aware Education Series

What products should I keep at home for my wounds with Lusi Sheehan

Hi, I'm Lusi, the Wound Care Pharmacist. These are the five top essential things that I would recommend for your first aid kit to keep your wound clean, protected and support the healing.

Alginate dressing and cohesive bandage

Have some gloves and have alginate dressing* handy for those minor cuts and grazes or even skin tears that is bleeding, and that will help slow down the bleeding. If you use a cohesive bandage to support it and keep it in place, provide some pressure and elevate the area. Wait for about 5 to 15 minutes until it stops bleeding and remove the dressing.

**Alginate dressings are highly absorbent, natural wound dressings derived from seaweed.*

Dressing pack and gauze

Next is a basic dressing pack and some gauze*. A dressing pack will have a tray that you can use to help you clean your wound and remove any debris and dirt and contaminants. But if there's any foreign bodies, you need to see someone to get that removed. It also has a little tray where you can put some saline in there, or at home you can use portable tap water. And that just helps to make sure that you have a nice clean wound before you dress it. And remember that is a key step before you put any dressings.

** The tray is part of the wound dressing pack*

Island Dressing

Next is an island dressing and an island dressing has a light pad in the middle to help absorb a little bit of fluid, and that's quite normal as part of the healing process of the wound. And it has a sticky border to help keep that in place, and that will keep it protected from water and bacteria, if it is water resistant. But always check and remove it and change it, if it does get wet. If it has a plastic film on top, make sure you remove the film as well.

Silicone foam dressing

Next, we have a silicone foam dressing and these are super useful for your first aid kit because they are handy for wounds that have a little bit more fluid and needs a bit more protection. They have a nice foamy cushioning pad that is very absorbent, so it can mop up the fluid, and also keeps the wound bed nice and moist. Because we don't want the wound to be too dry or too wet. And we want that nice moist wound for optimum healing. It has a silicone border which is very gentle, and the adhesive does not rip or

tear the skin when you remove it, so it's painless and not traumatic. So just make sure you check on this wound and see a health professional.

Tape

Now some other things that you might like to have in your first aid kit are tapes. So tapes comes in or forms. There's adhesives, there's paper tapes and silicon based ones. I like the silicon based ones because they are gentle and protective and doesn't rip the skin when you remove it. So, if you need to keep a dressing in place or secure it, these can be used to help keep the dressing on for longer. We tend to avoid using plasters because they can be very sticky and difficult to remove, and often they tear the skin when you remove it.

Adhesive remover

Do you ever find that your dressings sometimes get stuck? If you ever find yourself in that situation, an adhesive remover can be quite helpful to help break up those sticky bonds in those adhesive like plasters, for example. And they help to remove those adhesives a lot easier without damaging the skin.

Hydrogel and wound antiseptic

Now, this is a myth. Dry out your wound. We do not want to dry out the wound because it actually delays the healing process. So, if you ever find your going to be dry or scabby, we can use a hydrogel to help donate a bit of moisture and add back a little bit more hydration. So, this generally helps to promote the healing process and help it heal quicker. If your wound is looking a little bit infected with some redness or mild pain or increasing fluid, you may use an antiseptic that can be safe and not harmful to healthy skin and healthy cells. But always see a health professional or wound care clinician to check out that wound.

Key Takeaways

So, here are the top five things I would recommend for your first aid kit.

- Alginate dressing and cohesive bandage
- Basic dressing package gauze
- Island dressing
- Silicone foam dressing
- Tapes

And if necessary, you can have an adhesive remover and a hydrogel or an antiseptic gel.

But remember always see, healthcare professional or wound clinician to check your wound. So go out there and build your own first aid kit.