

Abrasions

The South Australian
Wound Management
Association
www.sawma.org.au



What an abrasion is

An abrasion is a type of wound resulting from trauma that leads to a rubbing away of the skin. Abrasions are usually shallow but occasionally they can be deep.

What an abrasion looks like

A fresh abrasion looks like a red, bleeding, painful wound.

Who is at risk of an abrasion

Minor abrasions are part of everyday life.

Older people with fragile skin are more likely to get abrasions.

How to help reduce the risk of abrasions

Wear long sleeves and pants.

Always wear appropriate protective clothing when riding bicycles, skateboards, scooters or motorcycles.

Specialised limb protectors are available from some medical suppliers for people at high risk of abrasions.

How to care for an abrasion

Always wash your hands with soap and water for 15 seconds and dry them on a clean towel before cleaning or dressing any wound.

If the wound is still bleeding use a clean towel to apply gentle pressure to the wound until the bleeding stops.

Carefully wash the wound well under running water.

Remove any dirt or debris from the wound with a clean towel. Do not use cotton balls. Pat the area dry very carefully.

Cover the wound with a non adherent dressing. Ask your pharmacist, doctor or health professional for advice on an appropriate dressing.

Change the dressing if it becomes wet, soiled or soaked with wound drainage.

When to seek advice from a doctor

If all the dirt or debris cannot be removed from the wound.

If the wound does not stop bleeding within 10 minutes.

If the wound bleeds every time the dressing is changed.

If the wound becomes painful or inflamed and this does not settle down in a couple of days.

If the drainage from the wound becomes excessive, smelly or discoloured.

If the wound becomes black.

If the wound has not healed in four weeks or if the wound becomes larger.

If you have any other concerns regarding your wound.