Visited 08/24/2020

UWHealth

Health Facts *for you*

Care of Your Unna Boot Dressing

What is an Unna Boot?
An unna boot dressing is a pre-packaged gauze bandage soaked with zinc oxide. This gauze is covered with an outer wrap to provide support and compression. It is used to treat slow healing foot, heel, or leg ulcers. It decreases the swelling in the leg. This dressing may be left in place for 1-7 days.

Applying the Unna Boot
Your leg and wound is washed before the unna boot is put on. An antibiotic cream, antiseptic or dressing may be put on the wound first. The unna dressing is wrapped from the toes to the knee. The dressing on the wound may be 3-4 layers thick. It dries in 3-4 hours. It will never be as hard as a cast.

Care of the Unna Boot Dressing
What to do:

- Watch toes for change in color (blue, darkening or white), temperature (cold), swelling, or lack of feeling (numbness).
- Keep your leg raised above heart level when reclining or lying down. Avoid sitting at a 90-degree angle for a long time. This position affects the blood supply to your legs.
- Keep unna boot dressing dry. Tape a heavy plastic bag around the boot when you shower. Keep your leg out of the tub if taking a bath. If the unna boot dressing gets wet or soiled, please contact the clinic.
- Walk daily as suggested by your health care provider. You may need to wear a slipper/shoe that is 1-2 sizes larger.
- Your instructions: _____

What Not to Do:

- Do **not** ignore any of these signs and symptoms of the toes:
  - Cold
  - Discoloration
  - Swelling
  - Numbness
  - Severe pain
- Do **not** put any object into the boot or under the dressing to relieve itching. Call your health care provider for advice on itching.
- Do **not** walk long distances until the boot dries.

What to Do for Problems:
If you get cold, discoloration, swelling, numbness or pain:

- Raise your leg above heart level when reclining or lying down.
- If the problem persists:
  - Gently unwrap the outer dressing.
  - Pour warm water over the unna wrap.
  - Gently unwrap the unna dressing.
- Call your clinic nurse, nurse practitioner, or doctor with concerns at: **608-263-8915**

Visited 08/24/2020

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©3/2018. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4410.