

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/clinicians-roundtable/educating-patients-and-caregivers-on-post-surgical-wound-care/36424/>

ReachMD

www.reachmd.com
info@reachmd.com
(866) 423-7849

Educating Patients and Caregivers on Post-Surgical Wound Care

Announcer:

This is *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD. On this episode, we'll discuss patient and caregiver education strategies to improve post-surgical wound management with Ms. Kara Couch. She's a certified wound care nurse practitioner, the Director of Wound Care Services at George Washington University Hospital, and an Associate Research Professor of Surgery at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences at the George Washington University. Here's Ms. Couch now.

Ms. Couch:

I think some of the most important things that we as providers can teach patients and their caregivers about handling their surgical wounds are really the basics. It's really important to keep your wounds covered. You don't want them to be open to air, that it stalls things out in an inflammatory environment. And we teach them basic bandaging skills, as well as what to look out for that could be a problem. So not just teaching how to manage the wound from a dressing standpoint or a cleansing standpoint, but also what would be something that you should call back to the surgeon's office or reach back out to your providers for—if there is an issue where you think there might be an infection, there's leakage from the wound, or you start having fever or chills. Things that could be signs of an early or impending infection, we definitely want to know about that as soon as possible.

When you're training patients and their caregivers, I think it's important to try and find out what's the best learning style for them and provide them with information in multiple formats, so by verbally teaching them and getting them to do what's called a return demonstration—especially if they have to be doing dressing changes or things like that—where they watch us do it and then we watch them do it and point out techniques. Oftentimes, I will have family members record what we're doing as far as the dressing itself because that helps them have some backup and some confidence that they're doing things properly. And then, of course, we give them written instructions with very explicit step-by-step processes. We try and keep things as simple as possible, but if things are going to be a little complicated, depending on what the wound is, we will even take pictures of the supplies and put it into a handout that we give them at the time of discharge that they can refer back to.

Announcer:

That was Ms. Kara Couch talking about how we can equip patients and caregivers with skills to ensure effective post-surgical wound healing. To access this and other episodes in our series, visit *Clinician's Roundtable* on ReachMD.com, where you can Be Part of the Knowledge. Thanks for listening!