



## HOW TO LOOK AFTER A HAND WOUND

### **Wound care in hand injuries and after surgery is vital for an optimal outcome**

**Good wound care** reduces pain, assists with healing, prevents infection and improves the type of scar you end up with.

#### **What delays healing?**

The wound is too wet or too dry. Both these situations compromise the ideal healing environment.

Other things such as infection, poor nutrition or disease can also slow healing.

#### **So, how do we look after a wound well?**

- Inspect the wound to monitor healing. How often this happens depends on the type of wound you have.
- Cleaning surrounding skin
- Cleaning the wound to remove excess moisture, dried blood and dead cells
- Apply the best dressing for the wound and still allow hand movement
- Treat swelling and pain at the same time
- Look out for complications

**What you need to do** if you have a hand wound, keep it dry with the dressing on in the first few days after injury or surgery. Make sure you have a follow up with your hand therapist (or doctor or wound nurse) for dressing changes. Due to our climate, this needs to happen in the first 5 days. From then on, your hand therapist can help you look after the wound and resultant scar as part of your recovery.