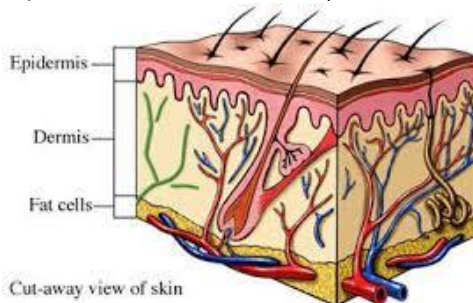


Skin Integrity



The **skin** is the largest organ system of the human body. The integrity of our skin is essential for maintaining the body's overall health. Our skin helps to maintain and regulate our temperature, protects deep tissues from ultraviolet radiation, and protects us from organisms, which may cause infection (Cowdell et al., 2020).

Impaired skin integrity is defined as an altered epidermis (outer layer) and/or dermis (inner layer), destruction of skin layers, and/or a disruption of the skin's surface (Herdman & Kamitsuru, 2019).



Risk factors for impaired skin integrity

- Age (reduced elasticity of the skin).
- Skin conditions (Eczema/dermatitis, cellulitis, rash, and psoriasis).
- Cognitive impairment.
- Dehydration.
- Poor nutrition.
- Obesity.
- Medications/Polypharmacy (immunosuppressive, anti-inflammatory, anticoagulant).
- Incontinence.
- Impaired sensation (neuropathy).
- Paralysis/Critically ill (unable to reposition self).
- Past history of chronic wounds.
- Compromised circulation and oxygenation (chronic diseases that reduce the skin's ability to repair damage, such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases).
- Care setting e.g. perioperative/ post-operative, intensive care unit (ICU) (Cowdell et al., 2020; Wounds UK, 2018).

Implementing a Skin Integrity Protocol

A skin integrity protocol should be based on prevention, early intervention and treatment (Wounds UK, 2018).

Prevention

- Monitor skin daily
- Report any observed changes in appearance, condition or circumstances.
- Caregivers and Direct Support Professionals should acquire knowledge of the person's documented medical history and identify risk factors.
 - Knowledge of previous skin infections, cancer, etc.
 - Document the individual's baseline skin condition, texture, etc.

Early Intervention

- Document findings and report.
 - Skin color changes or discoloration.
 - Monitor any variations in heat, firmness and moisture.
 - Reposition per treatment protocol.
- Dry skin: Implement a moisturizing regimen.
- Skin tear: Implement a prevention protocol.
- Incontinence: Implement a toileting protocol.
- Pressure ulcers: Consult the individual's PCP, or an RN, LPN, PT, OT or Certified Wound Care Specialist for their expertise.

Treatment

- Ensure all staff are trained to monitor and perform the individual's skin care protocol.
- Ensure risk assessments are completed and are understood.
- Ensure different treatment options are understood.
- Ensure correct pressure reducing or relieving devices and protocols for using them are in place.
- Ensure the caregiver knows when to consult a specialist.
- Ensure all documentation is completed and signed.

App of the Month



EPA's SunWise UV Index 4+

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designed this easy-to-navigate application, which delivers location-based UV index information. Ideal for plan-ahead types, the most useful feature is the color-coded hourly forecast that makes it easy to spot when the UV index is highest. (*App of the Month is not endorsed by DBHDS OIH. User accepts full responsibility for use.*)

Dental Facts and Tips

From the OIH Dental Team



Nutrition is very important for good oral health. Studies have indicated a balanced diet plays an essential role in lowering the risk of periodontal disease (gum disease). Key nutrients aid in nourishing the oral microbiome (mouth habitat). Dietary sources which include nutrients such as: **calcium** (e.g. eggs, canned bony fish, leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds); **magnesium** (e.g. cocoa, soybeans, spinach, vegetables, tomatoes); **iron** (e.g. red meat, tuna, beans, spinach); **zinc** (e.g. spinach, grains, all protein-rich foods); and **fluoride** (e.g. grapefruit, dried fruits, nuts, fluoridated water), are all important to help combat and prevent periodontal disease (Najeeb et al, 2016). Daily flossing and tooth brushing (using an ADA approved fluoride toothpaste or rinse), and routine professional dental check-ups and cleanings can help maintain good oral health and lower risk for periodontal disease.

For more information regarding dental facts, tips or dental service inquiries please email the DBHDS Dental Team at dentalteam@dbhds.virginia.gov

Reference

Najeeb, S., Zafar, M., Khurshid, Z., Zohaib, S., & Almas, K. (2016). The role of nutrition in periodontal health: An update. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5037517/>

The Benefits of SLEEP



When we look at the dimensions of wellness, there are areas of our life that can greatly affect our overall well-being. Perhaps one of the strongest influences in everyday life is sleep. Various studies have been conducted which clearly illustrate the need to incorporate sleep into our daily pattern of wellbeing (Jike et al., 2018). A good sleep pattern can help you: improve memory, increase creativity, lower stress, sharpen attention, improve physical abilities, maintain a healthy weight, extend longevity, and lower your risk of depression (Jike et al, 2018). The amount of sleep each person requires varies, with 6-7 hours being the average recommended amount per night. (Shaevitz, 2016)

Since sleep is so important to wellbeing, sleep issues can affect your overall wellness. Problems with sleep are more frequent in individuals with mental health issues. Treatment to improve sleep centers on a combination of lifestyle changes, behavioral strategies, psychotherapy and drugs, if necessary. (Harvard Medical School, 2019).

Take the time to listen to your body to determine the amount of sleep you need. In today's environment, self-care is more important than ever! A clear mind and a healthy body will improve your performance in every situation.

Please feel free to contact me: Teresa Secreti. CRi Wellness Coordinator. Email: TSecreti@MYCRi.org

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- Harvard Medical School, Harvard Mental Health Letter. (2019) Sleep and Mental Health. https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/sleep-and-mental-health
- Jike, M., Itani, O., Watanabe, N., Buysse, D. J., & Kaneita, Y. (2018). Long sleep duration and health outcomes: A systematic review, meta-analysis and meta-regression. *Sleep medicine reviews*, 39, 25-36.
- Shaevitz, M.. (2016) How much sleep do I really need? *Psychology Today*.

Coming up in next month's newsletter the **ABA Snippets** article

Behavioral services through DD waivers

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Coronavirus/COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is a rapidly evolving situation. The following links will help you stay up-to-date with the latest information. To submit COVID-19 questions (for response in an upcoming DBHDS FAQ), please email stephanie.waite@dbhds.virginia.gov

Latest Resources for CSB's & Other Licensed Providers: DBHDS – Frequently Asked Questions [07/2/2020]

<http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/assets/doc/El/dbhds-covid-19-7.2.20.pdf>

Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services, COVID-19 website <http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/covid19>

World Health Organization (WHO) <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

National Institutes of Health (NIH) <https://www.nih.gov/health-information/coronavirus>

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>

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