

Terminology and definitions for care workers

Afebrile	Without fever
Aphasia	Unable to talk. May also be used to describe defects in speech or comprehension of speech.
Arterial	Blood vessels that carry oxygenated blood away from the heart to body's cells, tissues and organs.
Bradycardia	A slow heart rate below 60 beats per minute.
Callus or corn	A callus or corn is an area of thickened skin (generally raised) that forms at pressure points over a bony prominence. They occur more often and build up faster on the feet of people with diabetes.
Cellulitis	A spreading bacterial infection underneath the skin surface characterized by redness, warmth, swelling, and pain. Commonly appears in areas where there is a break in the skin.
Chronic	Persisting for a long time or constantly recurring.
Compression bandaging /hosiery	Used to control oedema/swelling in the treatment of venous disease of the leg.
COPD	Chronic obstruction pulmonary disease – lung disease that interferes with airflow/normal breathing and is not fully reversible.
Dermis	Thicker layer under the epidermis (outer skin layer) containing blood capillaries, nerve endings, sweat glands, hair follicles etc.
Dysphagia	Difficulty or discomfort in swallowing.
Epidermis	The surface/outer layer of the skin.

Epithelialisation	Fragile new wound tissue that is pink, flat, pale and/or shiny.
Erythema	Redness of the skin caused by congestion of the capillaries in the lower layers of the skin. It occurs with any skin injury, infection, or inflammation.
Eschar	A hard crust or dry, dark scab that forms over a wound.
Excoriated	Red irritated area of skin.
Exudate	Fluid that has seeped out of a wound, blood vessels or an organ.
Febrile	Having or showing the signs of a fever.
GORD	Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease – acid from the stomach leaks up into the throat.
Granulation	Part of the healing process in which lumpy tissue contains new connective tissue and capillaries.
Haematoma	A solid swelling of clotted blood within the tissues/skin.
Haematuria	The presence of blood in urine
Haemoserous	A thin, watery, pink coloured fluid composed of blood and serum
Haemostasis	A process which causes bleeding to stop.
Ischaemic	Decrease in blood supply to a bodily organ, tissue, or part caused by constriction or obstruction of the blood vessels.
Lymphedema	Localized fluid retention & tissue swelling caused by a compromised lymphatic system.
Macerated	Softening & breaking down of skin resulting from prolonged exposure to moisture. Skin appears white/pale and is moist or wet.

Malodorous	Foul odour.
Neuropathy	Affecting the nerves with loss of feeling to an area. Common in the feet of those with diabetes.
Necrotic	Dead cells or tissue from severe injury or disease, especially in a localized area of the body.
Oedema	Excess of fluid collecting in the cavities or tissues of the body, especially lower legs.
Pallor	An unhealthy pale appearance.
Partial thickness	Skin tear that separates the epidermis from the dermis
Purulent	Containing or discharging pus.
Serous or Serum	Resembling, or producing serum. An amber-coloured, protein-rich liquid which separates out when blood coagulates.
Slough	Moist, creamy coloured devitalised/dead tissue.
Tachycardia	A rapid heart rate, usually defined as greater than 100 beats per minute.
Veins	Blood vessels that carry oxygen-depleted blood back to the heart.
Venous disease	Blood does not flow back properly to the heart, causing it to pool in the veins of the legs.