Aim of the leaflet
The aim of this leaflet is to provide information for patients, relatives and carers, and to act as a guide to answer frequently asked questions about Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT).

What is Negative Pressure Wound Therapy?
Negative Pressure Wound Therapy (NPWT) is a treatment used to aid wound healing with the use of suction (negative pressure). This suction is applied direct to the wound through a foam or gauze dressing, which is then attached to a machine or pump.

The pump draws fluid away from the wound and collects it in a canister which is attached to the pump.

It has been positively shown that this type of wound treatment can speed up the healing process. It reduces leakage and bacteria that may be present on the wound, and helps bring the wound edges together. NPWT can be used on its own or in conjunction with surgery.

Is it safe?
Yes the therapy is safe, as it is only applied to wounds following a thorough wound assessment by a specialist nurse or doctor.

Will I feel it? Does it hurt?
Some patients may feel a ‘tightness’ or ‘drawing’ sensation when the therapy first starts, which you may find uncomfortable.

Pain relief can be taken prior to dressing changes - if required. This should be discussed with your nurse. In many cases it can reduce pain due to reducing the swelling.
What are the benefits?

Reduction in the number of dressing changes required
This allows more rest and reduces disturbance to the wound.

Reduced infection risk
The system is sealed and fewer dressing changes mean there is less chance of wound contamination and infection.

Wounds heal quicker
It speeds up the healing process by encouraging blood flow in the wound. The NPWT stimulates new tissue growth. It may also promote well-being as you can see positive results quickly.

Reduces wound odour
Improved management of fluid means that odour from the wound often reduces over the course of therapy.

Can I move around?
NPWT does not prevent/inhibit physiotherapy or mobilisation so you can undergo rehabilitation simultaneously with treatment. Portable devices are available that enable patients to undergo therapy regardless of the setting.

Can I shower?
Yes you can take a shower. You can disconnect the pump for at least an hour each day and your nurse will show you how to do this.
Does it take long to apply?
Initially the negative pressure dressing may take longer to apply than other products. However, this therapy will be in place for up to three days.

Is it Noisy?
The device should make a noise only when it is establishing a seal; once this has been achieved the machine will operate more quietly.

What happens if the pump alarms?
Firstly, do not panic. If the pump alarms, the nurse should have shown you the functions and visual display on the pump and how to react to the alarm. Should any problems occur once you are at home following discharge you should contact your Community Nurse/District Nurse to resolve the problem. Tel No:

Please speak to your nurse if you have any concerns or questions about this treatment.

Contact Telephone Number:

Healogics Wound Healing Centre:

Named Nurse: