

# ELASTO-GEL™

## A Major Advancement in Wound Healing

For anyone who has suffered the pain and frustration of dealing with leg ulcers, pressure sores, burns, and other slow-healing (or non-healing wounds) any relief, no matter how temporary, borders on the miraculous. The development of occlusive dressings has been an unmitigated blessing.

Such dressings, which work by excluding atmospheric oxygen while stimulating the growth of new blood vessels, heralded a new era in wound healing. Nurses love them; many doctors share their patients' relief in not having to change dressings frequently.

But occlusive dressings have their limitations. Some dry too slowly and adhere to the skin, causing pain and lacerations. Others, despite their virtues, cannot control the exudate (wound discharge), causing offensive odors that, in effect, forced the patient to become isolated.

The ability to absorb exudate discharges is an important feature in the treatment of chronic wounds. Many occlusive wound dressings varied in their ability to absorb, five to six times their own weight (being acknowledged as an effective criterion).

Despite their superior healing qualities compared to ordinary bandages, several of the better known brands have been unable to maintain their moistness, drying out and adhering to the skin, causing

irritation and eventually failing to relieve pain from ulcers and burns.

Even with the dressings that excel in absorption capacity, a serious defect proved to be their inability to protect against friction and pressure because they lack padding.

The need to change bandages frequently is both a source of inconvenience, including the pain of tearing the dressing away from the wound, and the cost of replacing the pad. An ideal dressing is one that does not need to be changed often.

One brand has been identified that seems to overcome all of the disadvantages noted above. In an extensive investigation, conducted by *Nutrition Health Review* for the past six months, among burn victims and sufferers from chronic leg ulcers and lacerations, *Elasto-Gel™* has proven to be superior in the essentials. Interviews were also conducted with nurses and paramedics in various burn centers and dermatologists who treat complex cases of *stasis dermatitis* (impairment of venous blood flow), the cause of many chronic leg ulcers.

The brand most favored because it has met the criteria for reducing pain, improving wound healing, providing a minimum of discomfort in use, and minimizing exudate is *Elasto-Gel™* (See the accompanying box.)

### Features of Occlusive Dressings

The ideal occlusive dressing forms a gel cushion beneath the surface as the result of hydroactive particles in the dressing that interact with water.

Besides creating an ideal environment for cell migration and rebuilding of the epithelial (layers of cells) tissue, the dressing helps to liquefy and remove thin *eschar* (the slough produced by the burn or ulcer).

Removal of the slough precludes the necessity of "washing" away debris that ordinarily results from wound exudation.

The healing dynamics of occlusive dressings not only diminish pain of treatment but also make possible relatively easy bathing and washing procedures.

The injured area becomes water-resistant and flexible. Patients who dread the necessity of washing routinely are often dismayed by the painful experiences associated with bandage removal.

A proper occlusive dressing maintains a secure seal. It also prevents the emanation of leakage odors.

### Why Occlusive Dressings?

The advent of occlusive dressings reverses a century of medical theory. Although humans and animals have been treated for thousands of years with variations of primitively designed bandages and poultices, it is only recently that the principle of "occlusion" (excluding outer forces) has been tried and found successful. The closed-wound theory of treatment in most cases stimulates healing because the wound is forced to draw on the body's own ability to create new blood vessels and repair old ones.

The occlusive dressing represents a radical advance in "moist wound healing." The ideal is not to keep the wound dry at any cost, but to maintain its integrity in a moist, unexposed environment. In effect, a bacterial barrier is created while the dressing remains intact.

All occlusive dressing products on the market aim to embrace the benefits of this principle; few are able to achieve them easily and painlessly.

### Other Occlusive Dressings

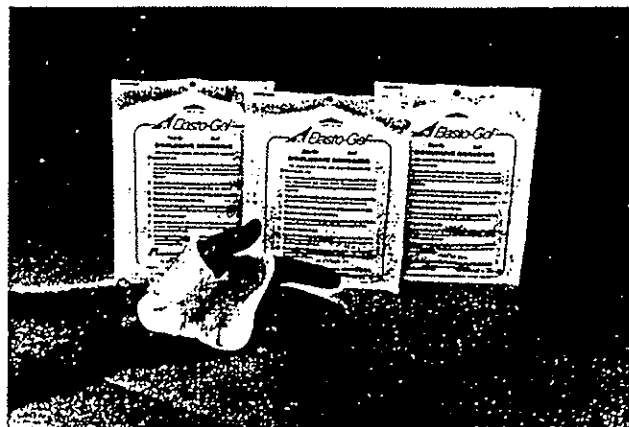
The makers of *Elasto-Gel™* have compiled a list of other manufacturers who produce occlusive dressings of various formulations. The compendium consists of comparisons between their product and others whose formulations and benefits may vary. The brands include Clear Site, Vigilon, Geli-perm, Sorbsan, Duo Derm, Nugel, and Tegasorb. The list is available, free of charge, from Southwest Technologies, 2018 Baltimore, Kansas City, Missouri, 64108. Telephone 816-221-2442.

### ELASTO-GEL™ Composition and Claims

- *Elasto-Gel™* is a glycerine-based hydrogel (containing water) and polymer, with the ability to resist drying out.
- The formula keeps the exudate from adhering to the skin and resists becoming liquefied. As it absorbs wound exudate, it merely swells and becomes rubbery, making it easy to remove when changing dressings.
- *Elasto-Gel™* conforms and covers the nerve, providing pain relief. Because it has mild adhesiveness, it can be applied to very sensitive and tender skin, allowing for daily wound inspection.
- The same application of *Elasto-Gel™*, according to its manufacturer, may be used up to three to six weeks on non-exudating wounds.
- *Elasto-Gel™* features padding, which should ensure pressure relief and can be used for prevention of pressure sores.
- Absorption is said to be three to four times its own weight of wound exudate. Flexibility is determined by the use of a stretch cloth backing, allowing the product to yield and move with the tissue (reducing nerve irritation).
- The backing allows for rapid transmission of moisture vapor.
- *Elasto-Gel™* contains no adhesives, but is slightly adhesive by nature, (helping to hold the dressing in place).

*(Editor's Note: The features of Elasto-Gel™ noted above, have been supplied to this publication by Southwest Technologies, Kansas City, Missouri. Nutrition Health Review does not vouch for the accuracy of content or benefits. In random interviews, however, with patients, nurses and physicians, the information seems to be accurate.)*

### A Versatile Dressing



*Elasto-Gel™ can be cut to conform with various body shapes: Knees, legs, ankles, back and shoulders.*