

**Vanderbilt University Medical Center**  
**Emergency General Surgery Service**  
Surgical Residency Rotation and Curriculum

**UNIT 9      WOUND HEALING IN THE ELDERLY**

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**UNIT OBJECTIVES:**

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the pathophysiological impact that aging imposes on wound healing.
2. Demonstrate the ability to manage complex and chronic wounds in the elderly.

**COMPETENCY-BASED KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Explain the effect of the following factors on wound healing in the elderly:
  - a. Nutrition
  - b. Metabolic state (including diabetes mellitus)
  - c. Immune response
  - d. Collagen deposition
  - e. Pharmacologic manipulation
  - f. Physical activity/mobility
2. Identify the resources needed to assist with chronic wound healing outside the hospital and outline methods for resource acquisition to include home health care and equipment rental.
3. Describe the use of pressure relief devices and beds to prevent pressure ulcerations.

**COMPETENCY-BASED PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:**

1. Provide basic care to chronic wounds and pressure ulcers, including acute debridement and dressing placement.
2. Evaluate the progress of wound healing.
3. Apply all types of dressings.
4. Remove complex dressings.
5. Provide post-debridement care to all débrided wounds.
6. Perform complex procedures for the closure of difficult wounds in the elderly.
7. Manage the care of various complex wound complications such as dehiscence, wound infections, and incisional hernias.