

MDS Alert

Coding Quizzer: Wound Dressings in Section M5

Do wound dressings have to be applied daily in order to code them in Section M5 on the MDS?

Answer: No. If you applied any dressing even once during the seven-day lookback, and it meets the RAI manual definition for MDS items M5e-h, check the appropriate MDS item.

The definitions at M5e-h read as follows:

1. **M5e. Ulcer Care** - Includes any intervention for treating an ulcer at any stage. Examples include use of dressings, chemical or surgical debridement, wound irrigations and hydrotherapy.
2. **M5f. Surgical Wound Care** - Includes any intervention for treating or protecting any type of surgical wound. Examples of care include topical cleansing, wound irrigation, application of antimicrobial ointments, application of dressings of any type, suture removal, and warm soaks or heat application.
3. **M5g. Application of Dressings (With or Without Topical Medications) Other Than to Feet** - Includes dry gauze dressings, dressings moistened with saline or other solutions, transparent dressings, hydrogel dressings, and dressings with hydrocolloid or hydroactive particles.
4. **M5h. Application of Ointments/Medications (Other Than to Feet)** - Includes ointments or medications used to treat a skin condition (e.g., cortisone, antifungal preparations, chemotherapeutic agents, etc.). This definition does not include ointments used to treat non-skin conditions (e.g., nitropaste for chest pain).

Source: RAI user's manual, chapter 3, pages 167-168.