Wound Care Insider

An educational resource from Gentell

November 2025

The Benefits of Honey Dressings

Honey has been used in wound care for thousands of years. Ancient Egyptians not only relied on honey's antimicrobial properties to treat wounds but also used it in the embalming process to help preserve the dead. Today, modern medicine uses the remarkable healing abilities of medical-grade honey as an effective tool to address antimicrobial resistance which is a growing global health threat.

Unlike the honey found in your kitchen, medical-grade honey is sterilized, significantly reducing the risk of allergic reactions when applied to wounds. Among the various types available, Manuka honey stands out for its especially high concentration of antibacterial compounds. Honey's healing capabilities are multifaceted:

- **Acidic pH:** Honey has a low pH, and this acidic quality creates an inhospitable environment for bacterial growth.
- **Dehydrating effect:** Its high sugar content draws moisture out of bacteria through osmosis, effectively starving and killing microorganisms.
- **Broad-spectrum efficacy:** Medical-grade honey has been shown to work against a wide range of pathogens, including drug-resistant strains such as MRSA and VRE.

Beyond its antibacterial properties, honey provides additional therapeutic benefits to:

- **Reduce inflammation and edema**, increasing patient comfort.
- **Neutralize wound odor,** improving comfort, dignity, and quality of life for those with chronic wounds.
- **Support autolytic debridement**, gently removing dead tissue by maintaining a moist wound environment—an ideal approach for palliative care rather than sharp debridement.
- **Promote tissue regeneration,** enhancing epithelization, angiogenesis, and fibroblast activity while encouraging the formation of healthy granulation tissue.

Because of these attributes, medical-grade honey is an effective treatment for a wide variety of wounds, including:

- Pressure injuries
- Diabetic foot ulcers
- Infected wounds
- Surgical sites
- Vascular ulcers
- Burns

Honey Hydrogel Sheet Dressings

Gentell Honey Hydrogel Sheet Dressings are sterile, semi-permeable wound dressings composed of 30% medical-grade honey, an acrylic polymer gel, water, and a polyurethane film backing. This combination helps:

- Rehydrate dry tissue
- Absorb low levels of exudate
- Maintain a moist healing environment
- Support autolytic debridement

Additionally, the film backing offers protective antibacterial properties.

Indications:

- Chronic wounds: pressure ulcers, venous, arterial, and diabetic ulcers
- Acute wounds: donor sites, surgical wounds, cuts, and abrasions

These latex-free dressings are sterile and can be trimmed to fit wounds of varying sizes.

Honey Hydrogel sheets are available in three sizes: 2.4"x2.4", 4.7"x3.4", 7"x5"

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Manuka Honey Fiber Dressings

The Manuka Honey Fiber Dressing features super-absorbent, cross-linked mesh fibers impregnated with Manuka honey. With a low pH of 3.0–4.5, it creates a more favorable healing environment. As a sustained flow of honey is slowly released into the wound bed:

- Exudate and necrotic tissue are absorbed into the dressing
- Eschar and debris are drawn into the mesh fibers, helping cleanse the wound
- Odor is reduced or eliminated, improving the patient's comfort, dignity and quality of life

This dressing is designed for ease of application and allows for daily dressing changes to monitor wound progress.

Indications:

- Moderate to heavily exuding wounds
- Diabetic foot ulcers
- Pressure ulcers
- Venous leg ulcers
- Full thickness skin trauma

Manuka Honey Fiber 4"x5" sheet shown here. It is also available in 2"x2" sheets

	Honey Hydrogel Sheet Dressing	Manuka Honey Fiber Dressing
Wound Type	**Stage 3, 4, Unstageable or Non-Pressure Full Thickness**	**Stage 3, 4, Unstageable or Non-Pressure Full Thickness**
Exudate	**Dry or Light (Scant)**	**Moderate or Heavy**
Available Sheet Sizes	**2.4"x 2.4", 4.7"x 3.4", 7"x 5"**	**2"x 2", 4"x 5"**

Resources:

Cooper, R. A. *(2016). Honey in wound care: antibacterial properties. GMS Hygiene and Infection Control, 11, Doc10. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5316199*

FDA Guidance*: U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Medical Devices Containing Honey. https://www.fda.gov (search "medical honey wound dressings")*

Molan, P.C. *(2001). Potential of honey in the treatment of wounds and burns. American Journal of Clinical Dermatology, 2(1), 13–19. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11749940*

Jull, A. B., Cullum, N., Dumville, J. C., Westby, M. J., Deshpande, S., & Walker, N. *(2015). Honey as a topical treatment for wounds. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, (3). https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD005083.pub4*