Directions to Change a Dressing

1. Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer.

2. Prepare your supplies. Set out supplies on a clean paper towels.
   a. Supplies include:
      - Clean paper towels
      - Three pairs of clean gloves
      - 4x4 gauze pads
      - Tape or transparent dressing
      - Skin prep
      - Cleansing product ordered by your doctor: saline, wound cleanser, or soap and water
      - Primary dressing ordered by your doctor (ointment, cream, gel, alginate)
   b. Keep the supplies together in a clean, safe place. Do not keep them on the floor.

3. Wash your hands with soap and water again or use a hand sanitizer. Put on clean gloves. Gently remove the old dressing. Throw it away in a plastic bag.

4. Remove your gloves. Wash your hands or use the hand sanitizer. Put on clean gloves.

5. Cleanse the wound as your doctor ordered. This may be with saline, wound cleanser, or soap and water.
   a. Discard the solution following manufacturer guidelines.

6. Examine the wound. Look at the color, the amount and odor of the drainage, and the size.
   a. Report to your nurse if there is:
      i. Increased drainage
      ii. Change in the color of drainage – brown, yellow, tan
      iii. Odor or change in odor, especially odor after cleansing
   b. Report to your doctor if there is:
      i. Increased pain
      ii. Temperature 101° and above
      iii. Excessive bleeding
      iv. Additional redness around the wound
   c. If you feel you are having a medical emergency, call 911.

7. Remove your gloves; wash your hands or use hand sanitizer. Put on a pair of clean gloves.

8. Apply the skin prep or protectant that was ordered by your doctor.
   a. This could be a special dressing, normal saline, wet-to-dry gauze, ointment, gel or alginate. Apply whatever wound treatment your doctor ordered.

9. Apply the secondary dressing (gauze) as a top dressing for protection. This could be a transparent dressing. Use what your doctor ordered for you.

10. Tape the dressing in place as needed.

11. Remove gloves. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.