

# PolyMem<sup>®</sup>

## The Ideal Dressing

Multifunctional PolyMem is a unique dressing that meets every criterion wound experts require of an ideal dressing.

**Additionally, it has beneficial qualities for wound healing beyond those specifically identified.**

## INTRODUCTION

References to the “Ideal Dressing” date at least as far back as 1954, when John T. Scales published (in the British Journal of Industrial Medicine) a list of 10 attributes an ideal all-purpose dressing should possess.<sup>1</sup> The list has been modified and additional qualities have been added as researchers have learned more about how wounds heal.<sup>2,3,4</sup>

Wound management courses teach that no one dressing category can meet the needs of all types of wounds from initiation of treatment to complete wound closure.<sup>1,4</sup> Conventional wisdom says that because no one dressing can meet all of these criteria, clinicians must prioritize the needs of each patient, compromising on less important needs to choose the best dressing for each wound at each stage of healing.<sup>1,3,4</sup>

This document examines each of the attributes that are currently considered important in an ideal dressing, as indicated by more recent literature.<sup>2,3,4</sup> The conclusion is that the PolyMem family of dressings\* uniquely addresses these seemingly contradictory wound needs simultaneously.

\*PolyMem is often referred to in the scientific literature as “polymeric membrane dressings or PMDs”

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| <b>Experts<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> state an ideal dressing should:</b>  | <b>PolyMem<sup>®</sup> dressings have unique attributes which make them able to meet and exceed every criterion wound experts state an ideal dressing should meet.</b>  |
| <b>Maintain a moist wound environment<sup>2,3,4</sup></b>   | PolyMem dressings maintain a moist wound environment. <sup>5</sup> Because PolyMem is hydrophilic, it draws moisture from the body into the wound bed to help hydrate dry areas of the wound. <sup>6,7,8,9</sup>  |
| <b>Be absorbent (manage excess exudate)<sup>1,3,4</sup></b>   | PolyMem absorbs excess wound fluid and locks it into the dressings to balance moisture in the wound bed. <sup>4,5,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18</sup>  |
| <b>Exhibit effective wound cleansing activity<sup>4</sup><br/>Remove chronic wound fluid and necrotic tissue<sup>3,4</sup><br/>Facilitate autolytic debridement<sup>3,4</sup></b> | PolyMem provides such an effective built-in continuous wound cleansing system that even narrow deep tunnels are cleaned atraumatically. <sup>6,7,10,15,19,20,21,22,23</sup> PolyMem facilitates autolytic debridement by pulling enzyme-rich fluid from the body into the wound bed and maintaining a moist environment. <sup>6,23</sup> The dressings' surfactant loosens the bonds between the slough and wound bed. <sup>4,23</sup> The glycerin and hydrophilic membrane draw moisture into the wound bed, which floats the loosened slough. <sup>5</sup> The super-absorbent in the dressing pulls the moisture, with the slough, onto and into the dressings to be atraumatically discarded at dressing changes. <sup>5</sup> |
| <b>Protect the periwound from maceration<sup>4</sup></b>  | PolyMem helps prevent maceration, <sup>4,22,24,25</sup> even under offloading devices and compression. <sup>11,12,20</sup>  |
| <b>Minimize disruption of the wound bed<sup>4</sup></b>   | PolyMem continually cleanses wounds. <sup>19,47</sup> Additional cleansing is not usually necessary at dressing changes; this minimizes disruption of fragile newly-formed granulation tissue. <sup>4,5,13,14,17,22,24,26,27,28,29,30,31</sup>  |
| <b>Support brisk granulation and wound closure<sup>4</sup></b>  | PolyMem consistently supports brisk healing. <sup>46</sup> Wounds granulate and can close quickly. Recurrence is rare. <sup>6,13,18,21,22,23,24,25,29,32,33,34,35,36,37,38</sup>  |
| <b>Reduce or eliminate pain at the wound site<sup>3</sup></b>   | PolyMem has the ability to subdue the nociceptor response, which can greatly reduce or even eliminate persistent wound pain. <sup>4,6,13,17,18,20,22,25,26,29,30,31,35,38,39,40,41,42,43</sup>  |
| <b>Protect the wound from further trauma<sup>2</sup></b>  | PolyMem dressings are soft and flexible, providing comfortable cushioning to the wound area, and PolyMem use also usually completely eliminates traumatic wound cleansing at dressing changes. <sup>6,18,28,44</sup>  |
| <b>Provide thermal insulation<sup>2,3,4</sup></b>   | Wound cooling can slow healing. <sup>3,36</sup> Because rinsing at dressing changes is rarely needed, PolyMem use diminishes wound cooling. <sup>28</sup> The PolyMem membrane insulates to keep wounds warm. <sup>10,25,36</sup>   |

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| <b>Control wound odor<sup>4</sup></b>   | PolyMem dressings' formulation provides natural odor control. <sup>5,18</sup>   |
| <b>Be permeable to gas and water vapor<sup>1</sup></b>  | The PolyMem membrane and the semipermeable outer film permit controlled exchange of oxygen and water vapor. <sup>9,15</sup>   |
| <b>Act as a bacterial barrier<sup>1,2,3,4</sup></b>   | All PolyMem secondary dressings have a semipermeable outer film which protects against microbial contamination. <sup>9,25,28,38</sup>   |
| <b>Provide antimicrobial protection<sup>1,4</sup></b>   | PolyMem Silver <sup>®</sup> dressings harness the antimicrobial properties of silver to prevent the dressings from harboring microbes. <sup>4,10,15,16,21,22,25,28</sup>  |
| <b>Be non-toxic and non-allergenic<sup>1,2,4</sup></b>  | Independent researchers tested the relative toxicity of wound cleansers and found that PolyMem's surfactant was the least cytotoxic; it was less toxic than saline. <sup>35</sup><br><br>Other silver dressings leach cytotoxic silver into the wound bed, but the silver in PolyMem Silver acts from within the dressing, allowing new tissue and fibroblasts to proliferate. <sup>16,25,28</sup><br>PolyMem is non-toxic, is not made with latex, and does not irritate patients' skin. <sup>9,11,15,21,27,35,45,46</sup> |
| <b>Be comfortable, even when used to fill tunneling, undermining, or dead space<sup>2,3</sup></b> | In addition to being comfortable to the wearer, <sup>47</sup> PolyMem WIC <sup>®</sup> and PolyMem WIC Silver Rope can reduce persistent wound pain when used in tunneling, undermining and dead space. <sup>4,12,22,25,26,28,31</sup>  |
| <b>Be conformable, even over joints (fingers can flex while dressed)<sup>1,2,4</sup></b>          | PolyMem is stretchy and conformable, <sup>42,48</sup> making it an ideal dressing choice for use over joints. <sup>7,36</sup> The PolyMem family of dressings includes specially designed finger and toe dressings for added convenience. <sup>20,27,31</sup>   |
| <b>Not allow tissue to grow into dressing<sup>1</sup></b>   | The PolyMem membrane is specially designed to prevent tissue from growing into the dressing; this is a problem with so many other dressings. <sup>15,34</sup>   |
| <b>Not cause pain or tissue damage on dressing removal<sup>2,3,4</sup></b>                        | Because the dressings are nonadherent and tissue does not grow into PolyMem, dressing changes are comfortable and atraumatic. <sup>4,6,13,15,18,22,26,30,34,42,44,45</sup>  |

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| <p><b>Not leave particles or toxic contaminants in the wound bed<sup>2,4</sup></b></p> | <p>PolyMem dressings are engineered to remain intact, even when fully saturated.<sup>21,28,42,45</sup> PolyMem WIC Silver Rope is reinforced with surgical mesh to prevent breakage, even when inserted into deep, narrow tunnels. <sup>13,21,22</sup></p> <p>The silver in PolyMem Silver kills microbes while remaining locked in the dressing, thus minimizing leaching of cytotoxic silver into the wound bed.<sup>16,21,22,32</sup></p> |
| <p><b>Stay in place<sup>4</sup></b></p>  | <p>PolyMem dressings are proven to stay in place, even when patients do not adhere to the treatment plan.<sup>6,7,18,25,36,44,47,48</sup></p>  |
| <p><b>Come in various shapes and sizes<sup>3</sup></b></p>                             | <p>The PolyMem family of dressings includes a wide variety of shapes and sizes to meet every wound need.<sup>9,10,13,23,47</sup></p>   |
| <p><b>Require only infrequent dressing changes<sup>2</sup></b></p>                     | <p>PolyMem dressings are changed only when “indicated” by the level of exudate drawn into the dressing.<sup>45</sup> While dressing changes may be as frequent as twice daily initially, continuous wound cleansing and moisture balancing allow PolyMem to safely remain in place up to one week after exudate levels stabilize.<sup>13,20,23,32,33</sup></p>   |
| <p><b>Be nonadherent to blood clots and granulating surfaces<sup>1</sup></b></p>       | <p>The wound contact surface of a PolyMem dressing becomes a soft, conformable, nonadherent gel when activated by wound fluid.<sup>6,11,22,42</sup> In addition, PolyMem continuously draws fluid into the wound bed, which keeps the dressing from drying onto the wound surface.<sup>6,18,27,28,31</sup></p>   |
| <p><b>Be sterilizable<sup>1</sup></b></p>  | <p>PolyMem dressings are gamma irradiated. Packages are guaranteed sterile until opened or expired.</p>  |
| <p><b>Have a long shelf life<sup>2</sup></b></p>                                       | <p>PolyMem dressings stored at room temperature are guaranteed for up to 5 years from manufacturing date.</p>  |
| <p><b>Be quick and easy to use<sup>4</sup></b></p>                                     | <p>PolyMem is so quick and easy to use<sup>20,21,32,47</sup> that when guided by health care professionals, patients and families can often perform the dressing changes themselves.<sup>5,6,12,14,15,18,22,23,26,27,33,35,44</sup></p>  |
| <p><b>Be cost effective<sup>1,2</sup></b></p>  | <p>The modest initial dressing price, decreased time and supplies needed for dressing changes, and quick healing work together to make its use extremely cost effective.<sup>21,32,47,49,50</sup> Facilities often make PolyMem their dressing of choice.<sup>6,11,20,23,33,35,38,47</sup></p>   |

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| <p><b>If self-adhesive, forms an effective seal while being removable without skin stripping<sup>4</sup></b></p> | <p>PolyMem Shapes are the preferred dressings for skin tears in many Post Acute Care facilities due to their excellent water resistant adhesion and atraumatic removal.<sup>47,51</sup></p>   |
| <p><b>Decrease bleeding<sup>4</sup></b></p>  | <p>In nasal surgery, PolyMem dressings provided excellent perioperative bleeding control and performed better than other dressings.<sup>52</sup> PolyMem was found to make a safe and effective intranasal dressing for patients undergoing control of epistaxis.<sup>53</sup></p> <p>The PolyMem membrane structure provides high surface area and fast absorption of liquids; both of these properties help facilitate hemostasis. In addition, the PolyMem membrane is thought to selectively absorb the watery portion of exudate, thus concentrating clotting factors.</p> |

**Multifunctional PolyMem is a unique dressing which meets all of these criteria, and it has attributes *beyond* the ones wound experts identified which help heal wounds.**

**PolyMem also helps to:**

- Improve the nutrition of ischemic wounds<sup>6,54,55</sup>
- Focus the inflammation, which is an integral part of the chronic wound state, into the damaged tissues while reducing the spread into the surrounding tissues through nociceptor inhibition.<sup>15,20,26,38,40,41,56,57</sup>
- Decrease edema, bruising and pain associated with tissue injury<sup>6,9,26,33,39,46,57</sup>
- Strengthen the scar (due to continued nociceptor inhibition) during the remodeling phase of wound healing.<sup>18,37,58</sup>
- Indicate when dressings require changing (a color change is visible through the semipermeable outer layer of the dressing), minimizing disruption of the wound bed.<sup>44</sup>

Most wound courses and textbooks teach that the dressing choice must be altered at various stages of healing, depending upon the current condition of the wound. However, PolyMem provides all of the benefits of an ideal dressing.<sup>1,3,4</sup> PolyMem can even add moisture to dry areas of a wound while removing excess moisture from highly exudative

areas, making it suitable for use over exposed deep structures like tendons and bones.<sup>28</sup> PolyMem can be used at any stage of healing and through all stages of healing for virtually all wounds.

PolyMem in either the standard or the silver configurations can be used to continuously cleanse infected wounds.<sup>9</sup> The cause of the infection should be addressed appropriately.<sup>9</sup> PolyMem Silver dressings, which contain small particle silver, have been proven to kill over 99% of the populations of representative organisms.<sup>32</sup> All PolyMem dressings pull exudate, drainage, dirt, slough, and fibrin into the dressing matrix; PolyMem Silver dressings also help manage bioburden and kill microbes in contact with the dressing.<sup>24,32</sup> Rather than placing silver directly into the wound bed, the silver in PolyMem Silver is built into the dressing to help eliminate the bioburden and microbes in the dressing, doing potentially less damage to the healing wound.<sup>16,21,28,37</sup>

Wound management must be affordable, clinically effective, and convenient to both the patient and care providers. PolyMem use promotes patient independence and increased quality of life.<sup>12,13,20,21,23,36,38</sup> Implementing protocols which use PolyMem dressings alone has proven to be more clinically effective, cost effective, and convenient than implementing conventional wound protocols.<sup>10,23,31,36,49-51,59-61</sup>

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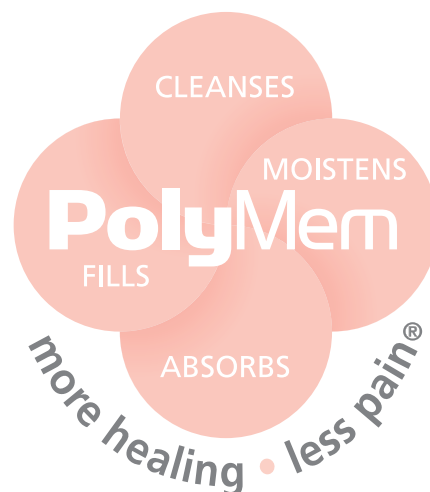
With PolyMem dressings, you no longer need to rely on multiple wound care products. PolyMem has everything you need in one easy-to-use dressing. PolyMem is indicated for virtually all wounds at every stage of healing.

PolyMem dressing are available in a wide variety of configurations, with or without silver, to meet every wound need:

- Non-adhesive pads and rolls
- Rectangular thin film or cloth adhesive bordered dressings
- Surgical bordered dressings
- Oval Shapes® dressings bordered with silicone or acrylic adhesive
- Sacral Shapes bordered dressings
- Shapes dressings for tube sites
- Extra-thick MAX® pads with or without adhesive border
- WIC® cavity filler in a variety of sizes, plus WIC Silver Rope
- Finger/Toe dressings in five sizes

SportsWrap® dressings are nonsterile products especially designed for closed injuries.

Learn more about PolyMem at [www.polymem.com](http://www.polymem.com)



PolyMem dressings are unique dressings that meet and exceed the criteria wound experts require in an ideal dressing.

PolyMem is indicated for virtually every wound clinicians may encounter.



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