

## June is an important time for action on wound care and nutrition

June is [Wound Healing Awareness Month](#) and a good time to consider the challenges of chronic wounds and learn more about interventions, specifically the importance of nutrition. Nearly [15% \(8.2 million\)](#) of Medicare beneficiaries have at least one type of wound or wound-related infection. Wounds develop in a number of ways, such as from surgery, trauma, or pressure injuries. Open, unhealed wounds increase the risk of infection and additional complications including loss of limbs, increased costs of care and mortality, and decreased quality of life. Chronic, nonhealing wounds cost Medicare a total of [\\$28.1 to \\$96.8 billion annually](#).

Wound healing typically slows with age and thus the risk for chronic, nonhealing wounds is increased for older adults. While wounds can “stall” in the healing process for many reasons, poor nutrition is one risk factor that can be overcome. [Adequate protein, calories, micronutrients, and fluid](#) is essential for all stages of wound healing. However sometimes a normal diet alone is not sufficient for the wound healing process to progress; more targeted nutrition is needed. The critical ingredients to be considered in a [targeted wound care nutrition product](#) are arginine, glutamine, HMB (beta-hydroxy-beta-methylbutyrate) and micronutrients, particularly Vitamins C, E, B<sub>12</sub>, and Zinc.

Targeted wound care nutrition can be an important intervention for helping:

- Meet our nation’s [Healthy People 2030](#) objective specific to wound care, “[reducing the rate of pressure ulcer-related hospital admissions among older adults](#)”
- Improve the outcomes for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) [quality programs and measures related to wound care](#).

Reducing chronic, nonhealing wounds, and better wound care can benefit older adults through improved quality of life, fewer infections, and fewer unnecessary hospitalizations.

### Resources

Litchford M, Drawert S: Nutrition and Wound Care: Why it Matters for Value-Based Healthcare Webinar, 2020.

<https://anhi.org/education/course-catalog/E6FD9514B0374E21B3A9DC790E8B9508>

Richards J, Litchford M, Pittman J. Nutrition to Aid Wound Healing in the Aging Adult. *The Journal of Active Aging*, January/February 2019.

[https://static.abbottnutrition.com/cms-prod/anhi-2017.org/img/Nutrition%20and%20wound%20healing\\_high%20resolution\\_tcm1423-128535.pdf](https://static.abbottnutrition.com/cms-prod/anhi-2017.org/img/Nutrition%20and%20wound%20healing_high%20resolution_tcm1423-128535.pdf)