



SCAM SPOTLIGHT

Be On the Look Out for Wound Care/Skin Substitute Fraud

Skin substitutes are legitimate medical treatments used to help certain wounds heal—but they have also become an area of concern for Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse.

Skin substitutes, sometimes called wound grafts, may be used for chronic or difficult-to-heal wounds when other treatments have not worked. When medically necessary and properly provided, Medicare may cover these treatments.

WHY IS MEDICARE CONCERNED?

Skin substitutes can be very expensive. Federal investigators have uncovered schemes involving medically unnecessary treatments, excessive amounts of skin substitute products, kickbacks, and services billed to Medicare that beneficiaries never received.

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In some cases, vulnerable older adults have been targeted for costly wound treatments, including people receiving care in their homes or in hospice.

WATCH FOR THESE RED FLAGS

You are contacted unexpectedly about wound care or skin grafts.

- A provider recommends an expensive skin substitute without explaining why it is needed.
- Skin substitutes are applied repeatedly without a clear medical explanation.
- Your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) shows wound-care services you don't recognize.
- Medicare is billed for treatments on days you did not receive care.
- You don't recognize the doctor, clinic, or wound-care company listed on your MSN.
- Someone offers money, gifts, or other incentives for receiving treatment.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Keep track of your appointments and compare them with your Medicare statements. Never give your Medicare number to someone who contacts you unexpectedly offering wound care or other medical services.

SEE SOMETHING? SAY SOMETHING.

If you see skin substitutes, wound grafts, or wound-care services on your Medicare statement that you don't recognize, don't ignore them—even if Medicare paid the claim. Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol can help you review suspicious charges and determine what to do next. Call us Toll-Free 888-818-2611

