



NORTHWEST COUNSELING CENTER, LLC

DR. BOB BAKKO, LCPC, CCMHC, PC • GWEN FELTEN, MA, LCPC, PC • DENNIS MURI, LCSW, LAC
LORINNE BURKE, MMFT, LCPC, PC • DUSTIN LEHMAN, MS, LCPC, LMFT

The 6 Steps of the Wound Healing Process and Restoration Therapy

- Dustin Lehman, MS, LCPC, LMFT

Your blood cells play several roles in the healing process.

As your body engages in wound healing, a wonderful process occurs throughout each of the systems that comprise your body. According to a study published in the *World Journal of Surgery*, there are six wound healing stages, each of which rely on one another in order to completely close a wound. Knowing what each step involves is crucial in developing a comprehensive healing plan.

- 1. Rapid hemostasis** — This refers to the mechanism that stops the actual bleeding. Most of the time, your body will accomplish this through a process called vasoconstriction, in which your blood vessels are closed tight. It's similar to how you might turn a level as to stop a leaky faucet.
- 2. Inflammation** — Inflammation is your body's way of alerting you of an injury. Beyond that, it helps dictate where the next barrage of healthy cells should be headed. As such, inflammation is vital in the wound care process, but if it goes on for too long, it can actually prevent regeneration.
- 3. Proliferation and migration** — When inflammation occurs, the body releases several kinds of cells, including those that are responsible for migration and proliferation. The former function actually refers to the movement of the cells, a carefully coordinated process that involves cells moving in a specific order. Meanwhile, proliferation is similar to hemostatis, as cells work to further constrict your blood vessels.
- 4. Angiogenesis** — Once the bleeding is under control, the body then begins the process of rebuilding tissue. Angiogenesis, as it's called, involves the formation of new blood vessels. This process occurs when your body's cells begin to replace the veins and arteries that were damaged, either creating new sections or adding onto existing portions. It's a decidedly complex endeavor, with many chemicals activating to facilitate these all-new veins.
- 5. Reepithelialization** — Once your body has begun to regrow veins, it's time to begin regrowing damaged skin. Your epidermis is comprised of cells called keratinocytes, and during the reepithelialization process, your body has to begin forging these chemical components. The process involves the creation of several layers, each working in tandem to offer protection and prevent fluid loss.
- 6. Synthesis** — Though it's seen as the last step, synthesis often happens almost simultaneously. In this process, certain proteins form blood clots, which helps further prevent bleeding as new skin and veins are formed. There are a number of proteins at play, and certain people lack those necessary proteins to form blood clots.

Advanced Tissue. (2015, September 15). *The 6 Steps of the Wound Healing Process*. Retrieved May 2, 2017, from <https://www.advancedtissue.com/the-6-steps-of-the-wound-healing-process/>

Hargrave, T. D., & Pfitzer, F. (2011). *Restoration therapy: understanding and guiding healing in marriage and family therapy*. New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.

Restoration Therapy

Pain Cycle — *Identifying pain*. Knowing where the wound is located is critical to "stop the bleed" or contain further wounding. When wounded, focus is constricted/constrained or limited; perspective is often "closed tight."
> *Tier II, Critical Stage* — This often falls between our Primary Pain and **Coping Behaviors**, which is generally our reaction to the wound (Inflammation). This reaction is meant for survival and creates triggers to identify potential future events.

Peace Cycle — Movement towards healing. Accessing and increasing the vocabulary to emphasize **Truth** that surrounds or characterizes our identity. The vocabulary of identity statements must be connected to the pain and requires cohesion with the context.
> Once cohesion (or homeostasis) is achieved, the corrective **Action(s)** can be activated. This is where "the formation of new" behavior occurs. In our brain, this is where we move from the limbic system or Amygdala (fight, flight, or freeze; tier II) to the Pre-frontal Cortex, exercising the neuropsychology to integrate the cortices and expedite regulation and healing.

All Providers of Northwest Counseling Center are Independent Practitioners

OFFICE LOCATION:
1597 AVENUE D, STE. 7
BILLINGS, MT 59102

406.259.6161
(F) 406.259.5588
INFO@NWCC-MT.COM