

Skin Coverage In Upper Limb Amputations

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Management of upper limb amputations is aimed at reconstruction of a functional hand. The final outcome is ideally a painless functionally sensate extremity. One of the factors that affect the decision as to which is the most appropriate surgical intervention is the skin coverage over the wound.

There are many ways to achieve adequate skin coverage. The simplest technique is to regularly dress a wound. With time, this will heal well over the fingertips especially with occlusive dressing methods. Composite grafts and skin grafts have a selected role to play as well. Larger defects, particularly with exposure of the phalanges, may need advancement flaps or even local flaps from adjacent fingers or the palm. If the wound is too large, the resultant scar may cause contractures. In this case, there is a need to resurface with a local or free flap.