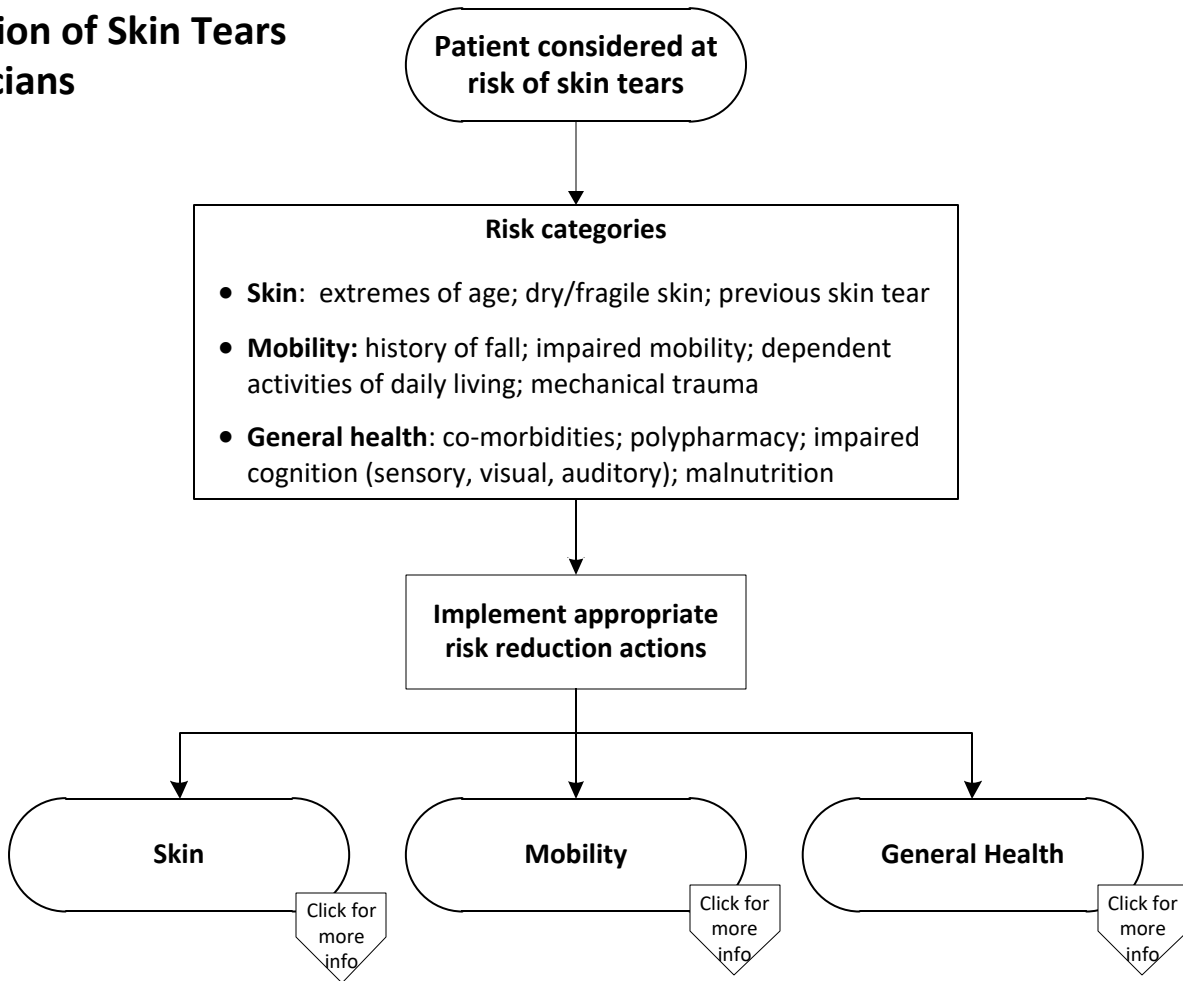


Prevention of Skin Tears by Clinicians



Back to
pathway

Skin

- Inspect skin and investigate previous history of skin tears
- If patient has dry, fragile, vulnerable skin, assess risk of accidental trauma
- Consider medications that may directly affect skin (e.g. topical and systemic steroids)
- Implement an individualised skin care plan using a skin-friendly cleanser (not traditional soap) and warm (not hot) water
- Remove dry skin and use emollient to rehydrate limbs as required
- Prevent skin trauma from adhesives, dressings and tapes (use silicone tape and cohesive retention bandages)
- Be aware of increased risk due to extremes of age
- Discuss use of protective clothing (e.g. shin guards, long sleeves or retention bandages)
- Avoid sharp fingernails or jewellery in patient contact

Mobility

- Encourage active involvement/ exercises if physical function is impaired
- Avoid friction and shearing (e.g. use glide sheets, hoists), using good manual handling techniques as per local guidelines
- Conduct falls risk assessment
- Ensure that sensible/comfortable shoes are worn
- Apply clothing and compression garments carefully
- Ensure a safe environment – adequate lighting, removing obstacles
- Use padding for equipment (as per local policy) and furniture
- Assess potential skin damage from pets

Back to
pathway

General Health

- Educate patient and carers on skin tear risk and prevention
- Actively involve the patient/carer in care decisions where appropriate
- Refer to appropriate specialist if impaired sensory perception is problematic (e.g. diabetes)
- Consider possible effects of medications and polypharmacy on the patient's skin