



WOUND SPECIALIST
Services

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GOLD COAST

An Australian Government Initiative



Skin Tears: How to Assess, Manage & Prevent Them

12 63 103 13 7

Welcome to Country

We respectfully acknowledge the people of the Yugambah language region, the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, and pay our respect to their elders past and present, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples here today.



Acknowledgements



Disclaimer

The views expressed in this presentation represent best available evidence and/or the professional opinions of the presenter

The information presented is drawn from personal clinical experience & does not necessarily reflect those of the companies

All photography used & the cases discussed have provided consent or are available to the public

Please refer to local protocols & standards set by regulatory bodies and peak bodies

Refer to manufacturer's instructions for use for all product application

The products discussed do not represent endorsement of any particular product or manufacturer

Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you should be able to:

- Identify factors that affect skin integrity
- Determine skin assessment strategies for risk reduction
- Recognise the types of skin tears & how to classify them
- Describe treatment strategies
- Identify preventive strategies to reduce the risk of skin tears

Skin Tears: The Problem

Most common wound in older persons

Painful & affect quality of life

Increase risk of hospitalisation

Important safety & quality indicator

Reportable adverse event

The Functions of the Skin

- Largest organ of the body
- Accounts for 15% of body weight
- Acts as a barrier against chemical, physical & mechanical hazards & invasion from microorganisms & allergens

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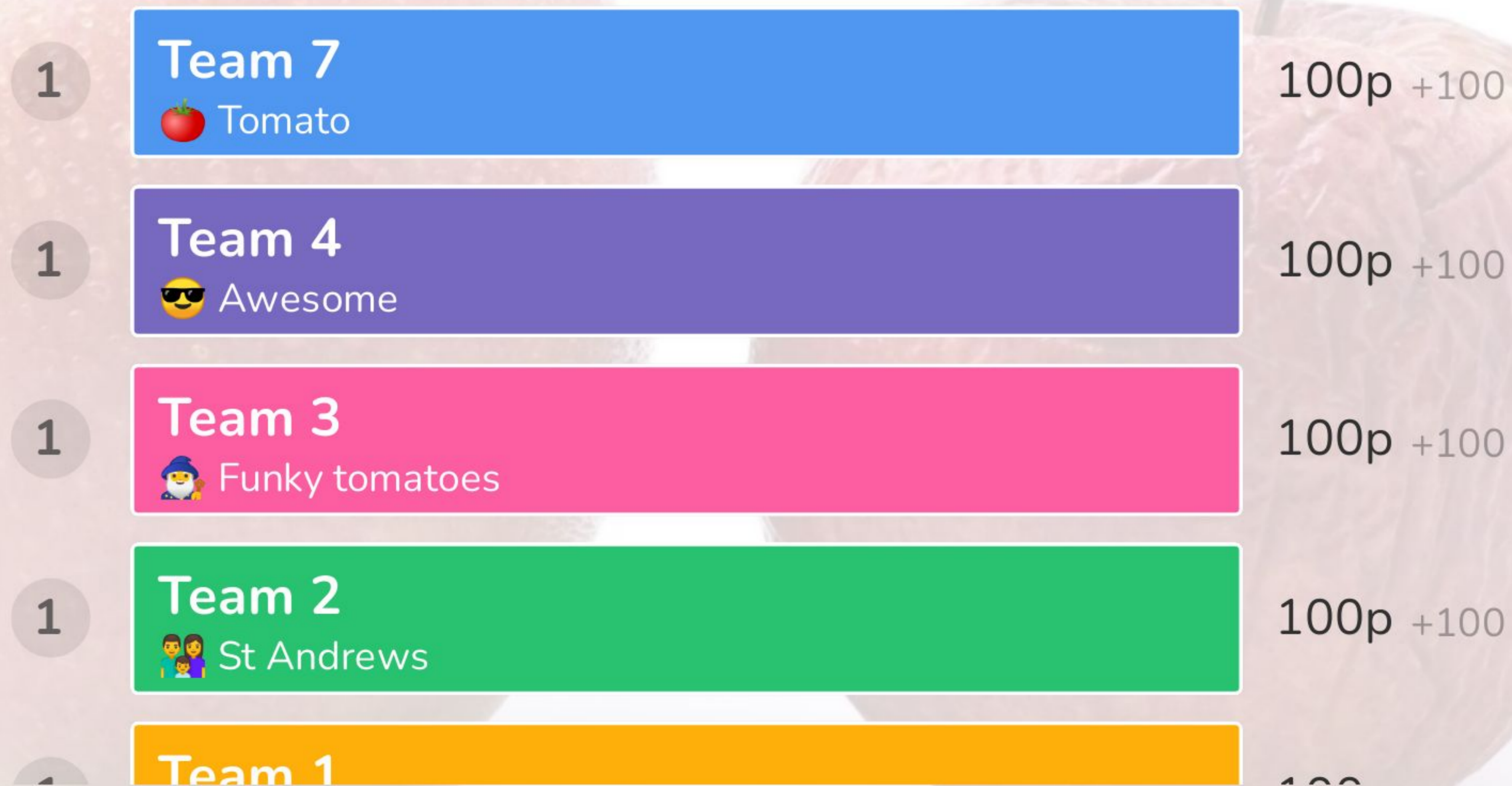


What is a skin tear?



Leaderboard

6 teams



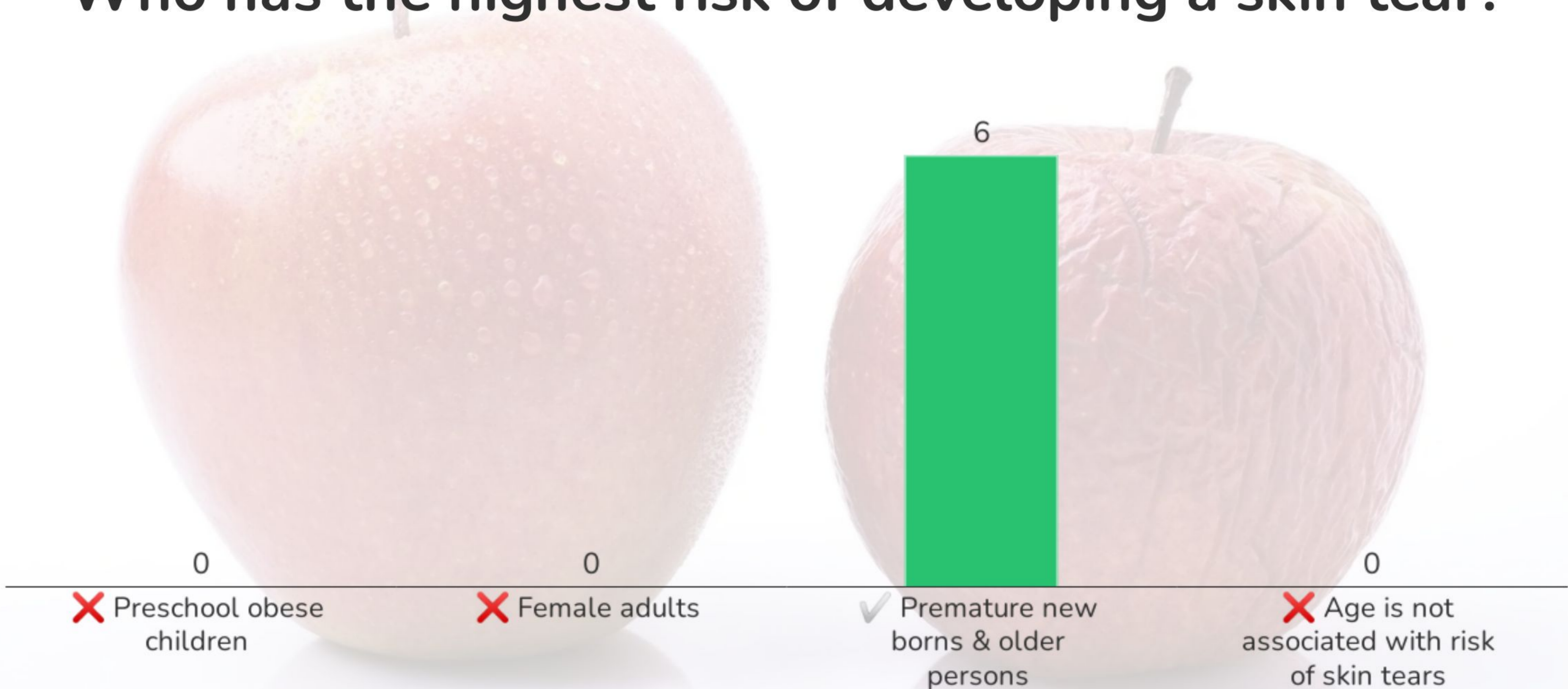
Show Individual Ranking

What is a skin tear?

“A skin tear is a traumatic wound caused by mechanical forces, including removal of adhesives. Severity may vary by depth (not extending through the subcutaneous layer)”

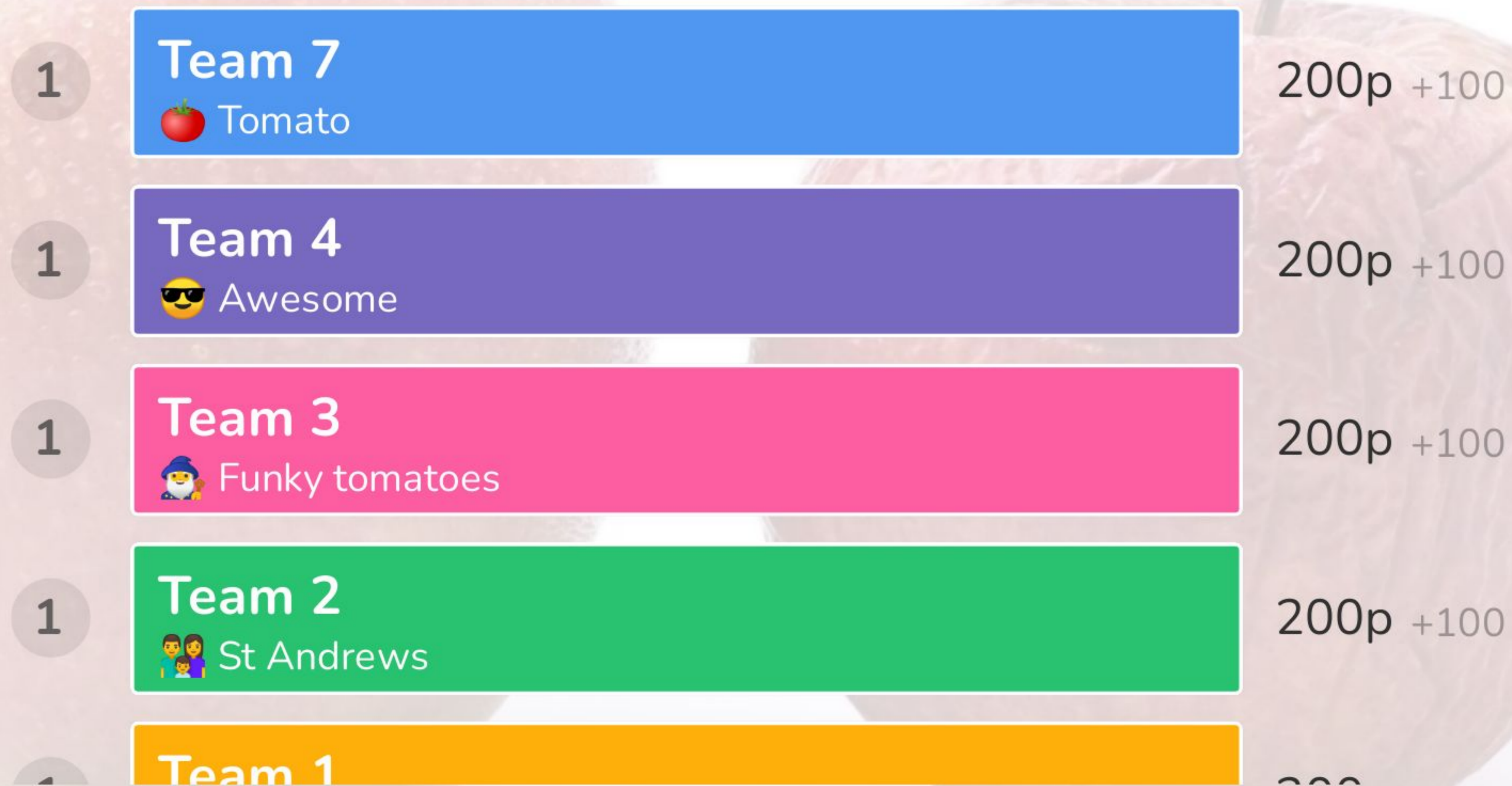
(Le Blanc et al, 2018)

Who has the highest risk of developing a skin tear?



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How does the ageing process affect the skin?



✗ Increased sweat gland function

✗ Increased skin elasticity

✗ Increased amount of subcutaneous fat

✓ Flattening of the dermo-epidermal junction

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How ageing affects the skin

- Skin becomes thinner
- Decreased epidermal turnover
- Reduced elastin & collagen
- Reduced blood supply
- Subcutaneous fat decreases
- Skin hydration decreases (dry, itchy, irritated skin)
- pH changes affecting the acid mantle
- Immune function decreases
- Changes to the dermo-epidermal junction (papillary layer flattens) i.e. wrinkles

Causes of skin tears

Trauma

Falls

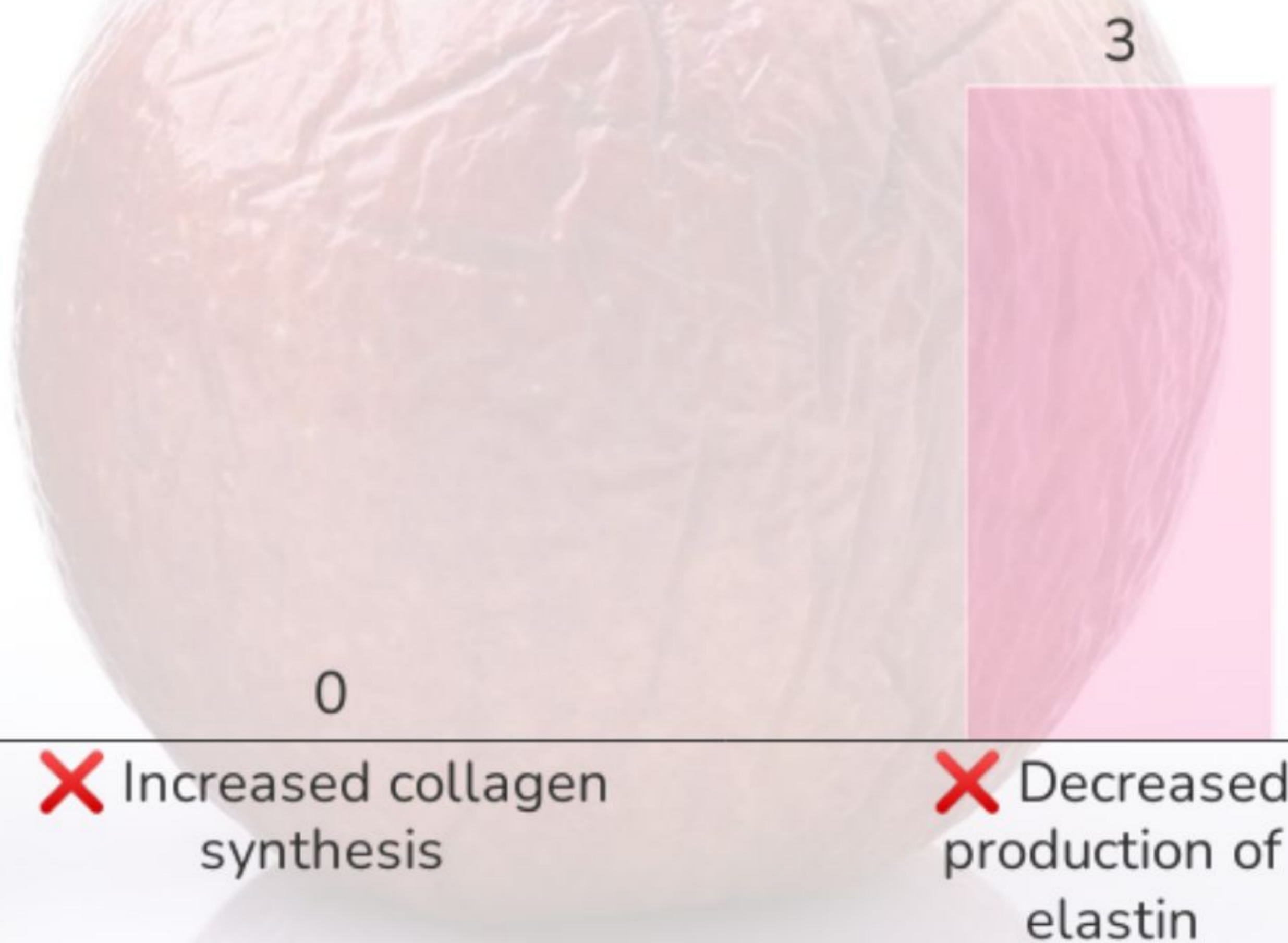
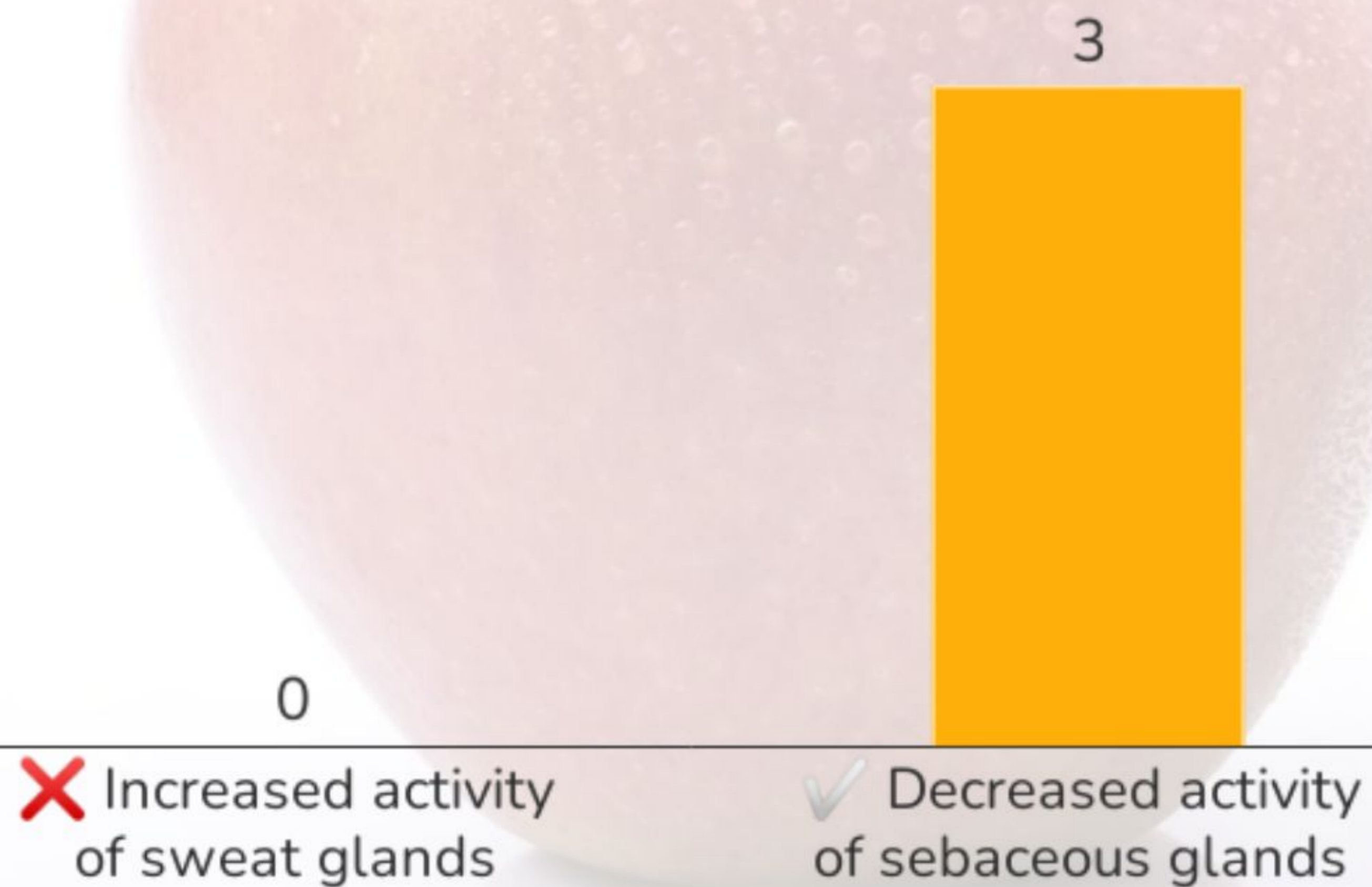
During activities of daily living

Dressing or treatment related

During transfer

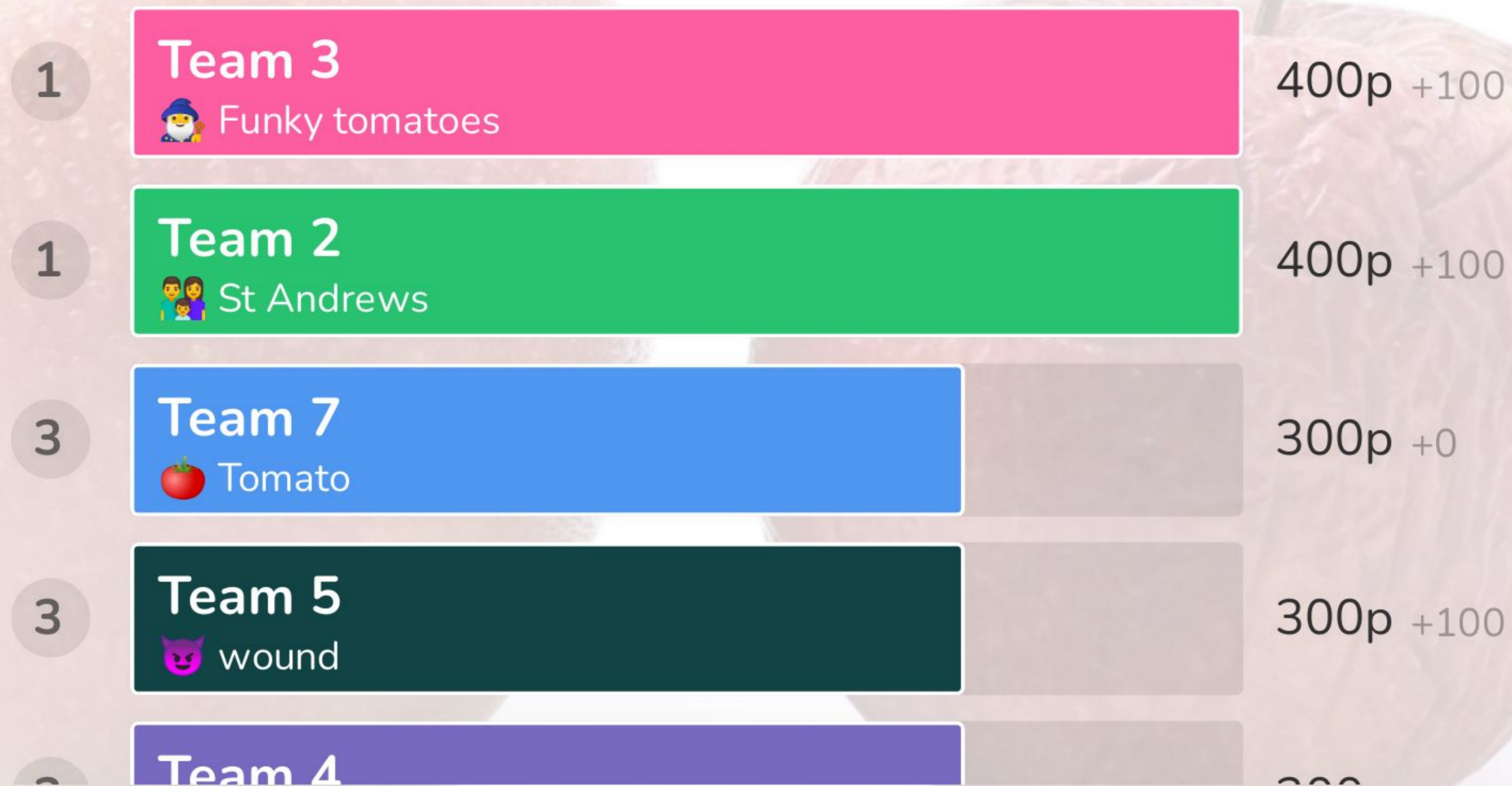
Equipment injury

Which factor is associated with dry skin in older persons?



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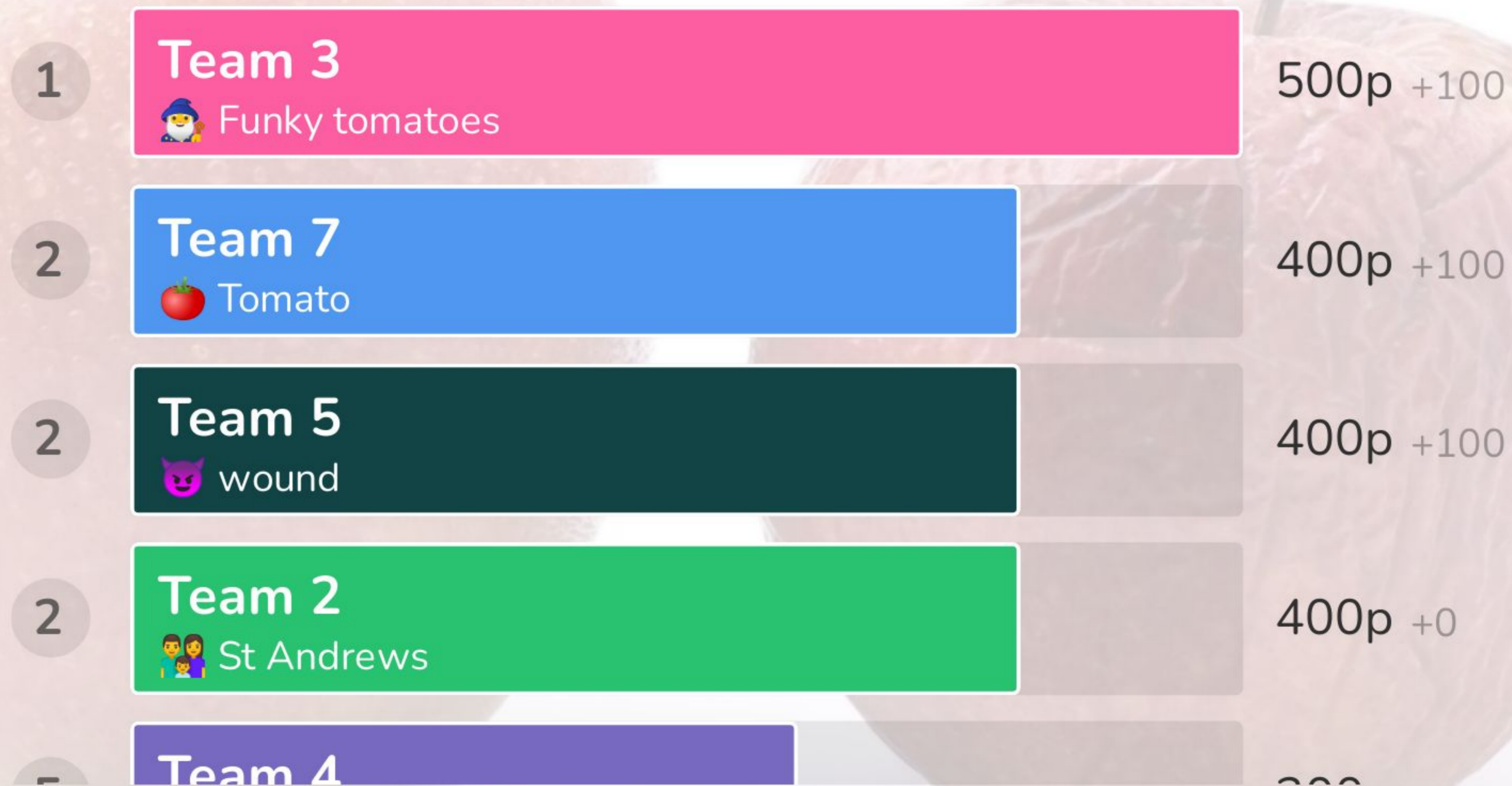
Show Individual Ranking

Why is the long-term use of corticosteroids a risk factor for developing a skin tear?



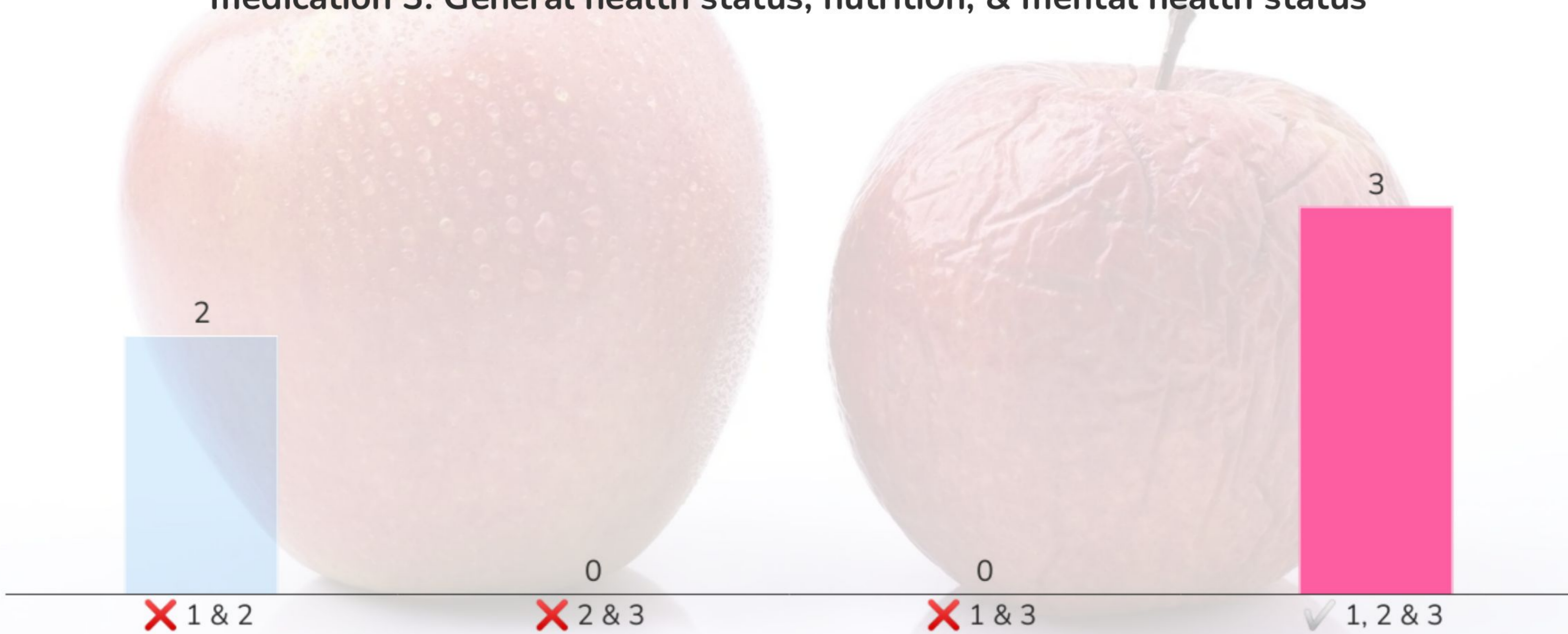
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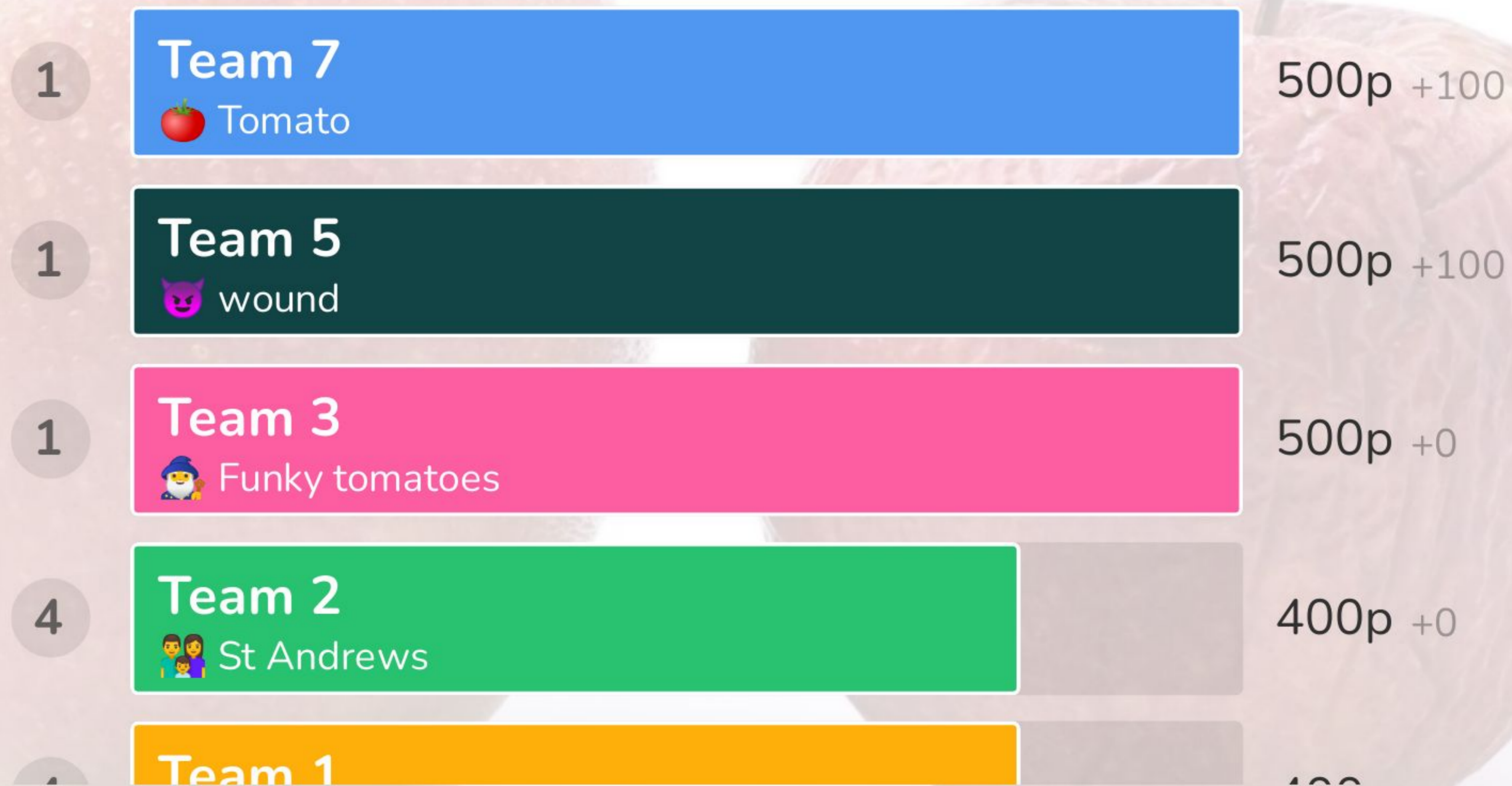
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Which information should be documented when doing an assessment of skin tears?
 1. Cause, length, width, depth & pain
 2. Type & amount of exudate, integrity of surrounding skin, & medication
 3. General health status, nutrition, & mental health status



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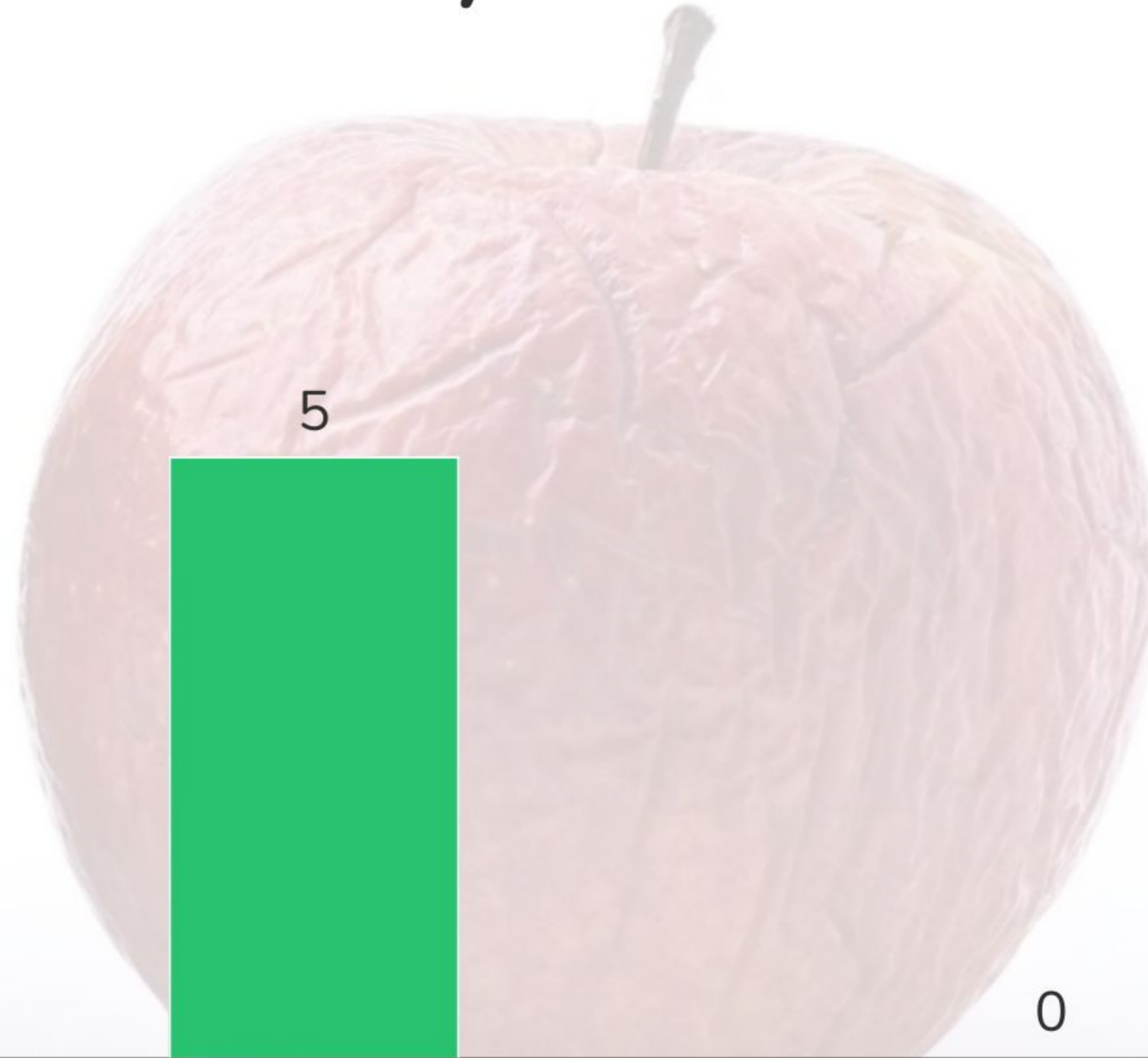


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Information that should be documented

- Cause of the skin tear
- Wound location
- Size (length, width, depth)
- Wound-associated pain
- Type & amount of exudate
- Condition of the surrounding skin
- Medication
- General health status
- Nutrition & hydration
- Psychosocial status

Classify this skin tear using the International Skin Tear Advisory Panel (ISTAP) Classification system



✗ Type 1 skin tear - no skin loss

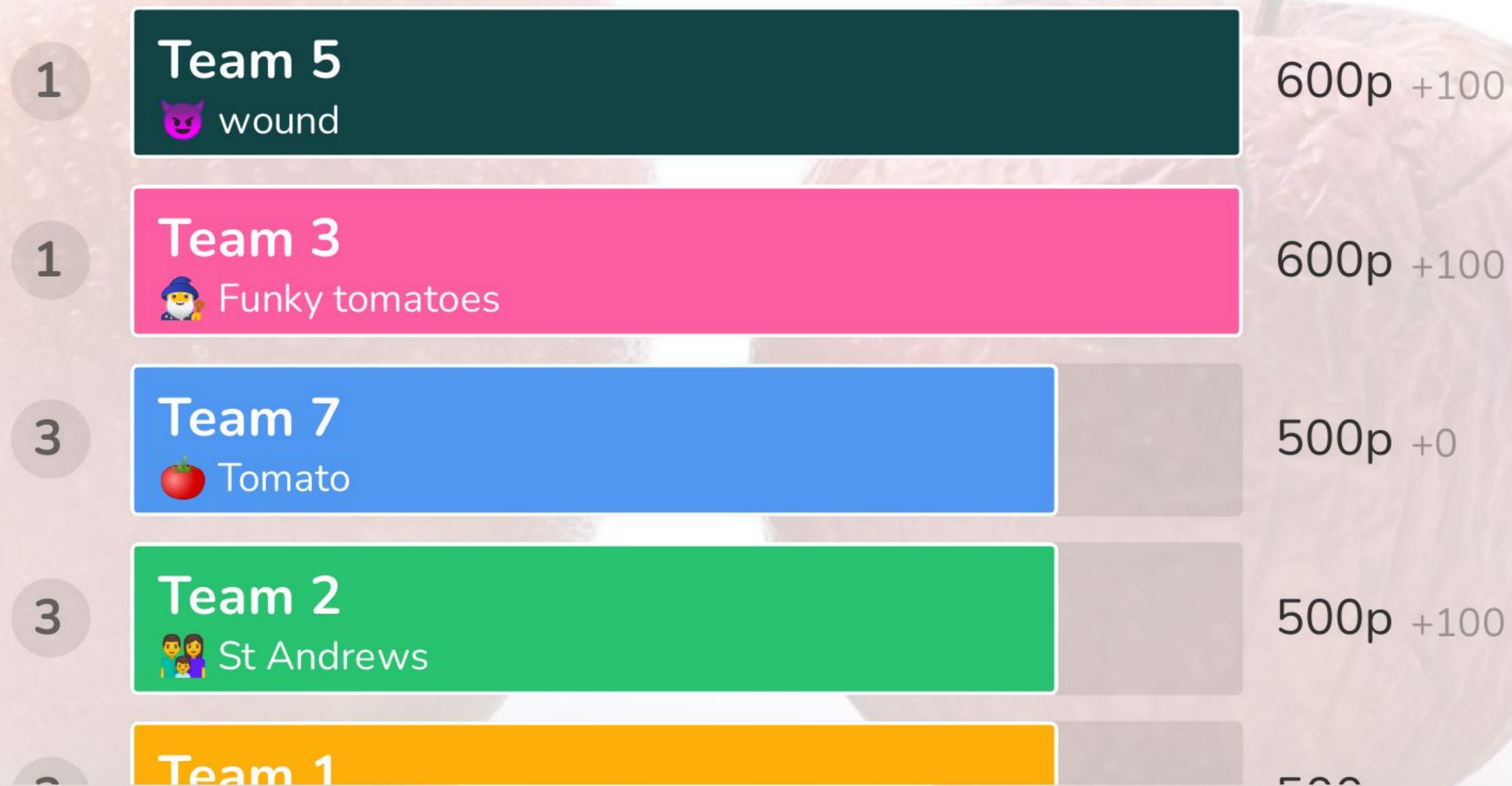
✗ Type 2 skin tear - partial flap loss

✓ Type 3 skin tear - total flap loss

✗ Unstageable




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International Skin Tear Advisory Panel (ISTAP) Skin Tear Classification Tool

Type 1: No Skin Loss	Type 2: Partial Flap Loss	Type 3: Total flap loss
		
Linear or Flap Tear which can be repositioned to cover the wound bed	Partial Flap loss which cannot be repositioned to cover the wound bed	Total Flap loss exposing entire wound bed

(LeBlanc, Baranoski, Holloway, & Langemo, 2013)

Type 1 Skin Tear



No skin loss

Linear or flap skin tear which can be repositioned to cover the wound bed

Type 2 Skin Tear



Partial flap loss

Partial flap loss where skin flap cannot be repositioned to cover the wound bed



12

63

103

13

7

Type 3



Total flap loss exposing entire wound bed

Which picture is a Type 1 Skin Tear according to the ISTAP Classification System (2019)?



✗



✗



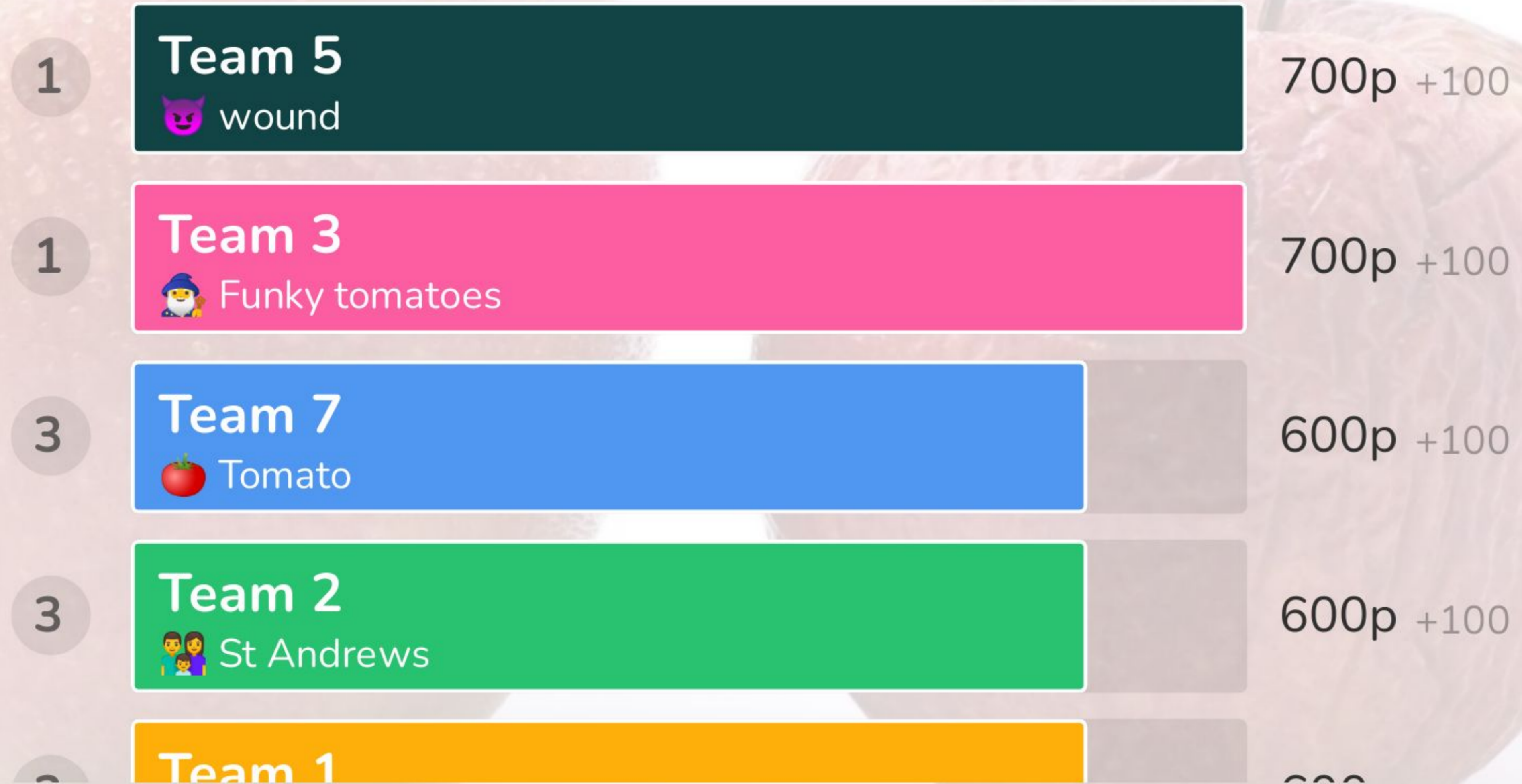
✓



✗

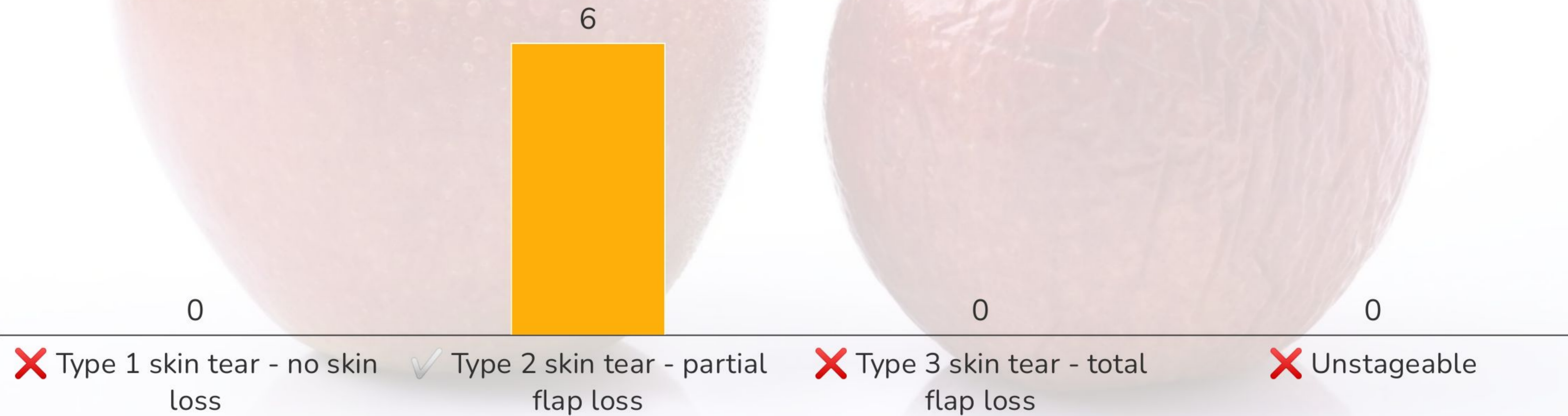
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Classify this skin tear using the ISTAP Classification System (2019)



Type 1 skin tear - no skin loss

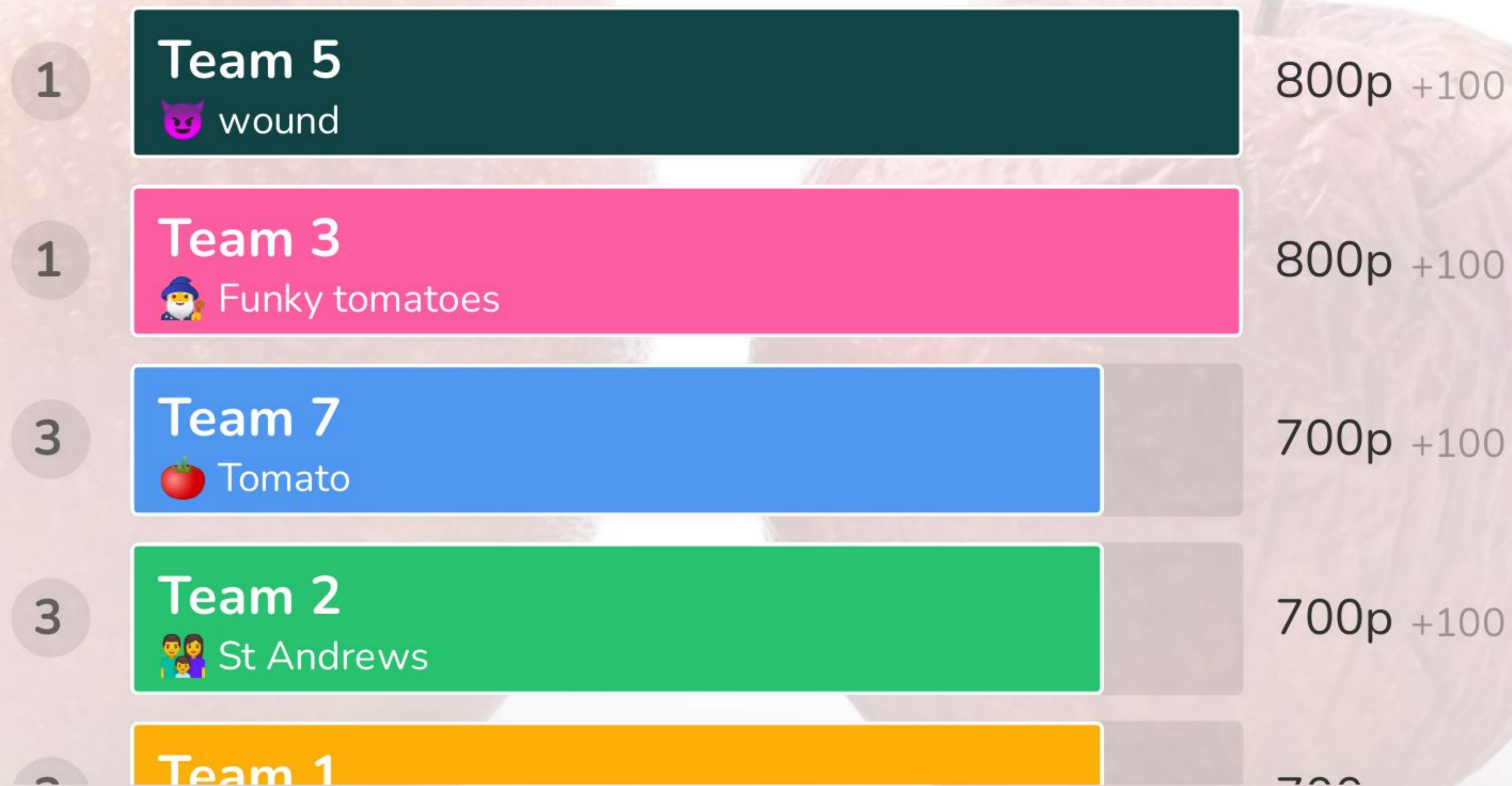
Type 2 skin tear - partial flap loss

Type 3 skin tear - total flap loss

Unstageable

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Risk assessment



EARLY RECOGNITION OF
THOSE AT RISK IS ESSENTIAL



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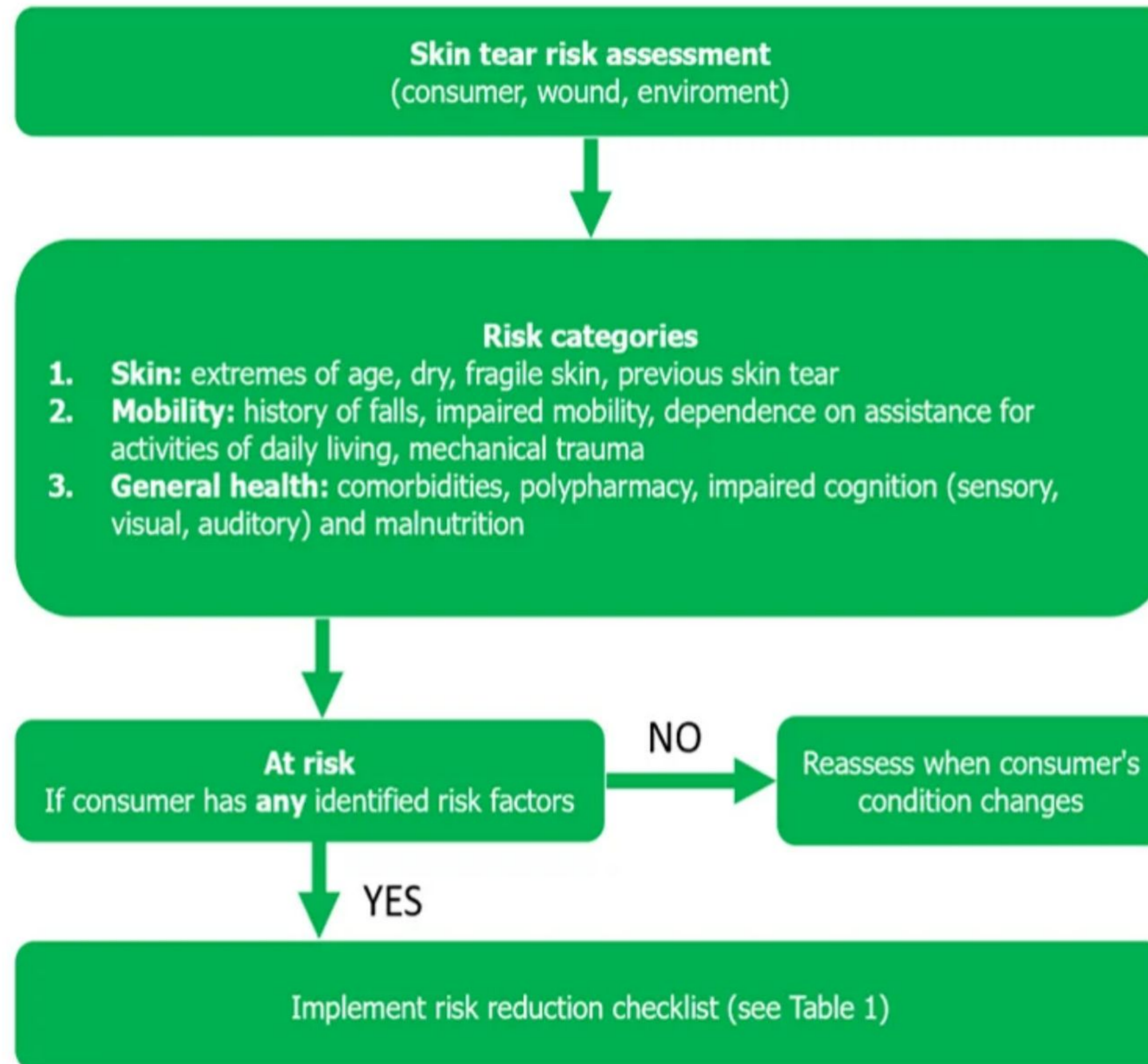
AS PART OF DAILY CARE
ROUTINE

Risk factors



(LeBlanc, Campbell, et al., 2018)

Risk assessment protocol



Risk reduction checklist: Skin

- Inspect skin & investigate previous history of skin tears
- If person has dry, fragile, vulnerable skin, assess risk of accidental trauma
- Manage dry skin & use emollient to rehydrate skin
- Implement an individualised skin care plan using a skin-friendly cleanser (not traditional soap) and warm (not hot) water
- Prevent skin trauma from adhesives, dressings & tapes (use silicone tape & cohesive retention bandages)
- Consider medications that may directly affect skin (e.g. topical & systemic steroids)
- Be aware of increased risk of extremes of age
- Discuss use of protective clothing (e.g. limb protectors, long sleeves or retention bandages)
- Keep fingernails trimmed and avoid jewellery

Risk reduction checklist: Mobility

- Encourage active involvement/exercises
- Avoid friction & shearing (e.g. use slide sheets, hoists) & use good manual handling techniques
- Daily skin assessment & monitoring for skin tears
- Conduct falls risk assessment
- Ensure that footwear is well-fitting
- Apply clothing & compression garments carefully
- Ensure a safe environment (adequate lighting, remove obstacles)
- Use padding for equipment & furniture

Risk reduction checklist: General health

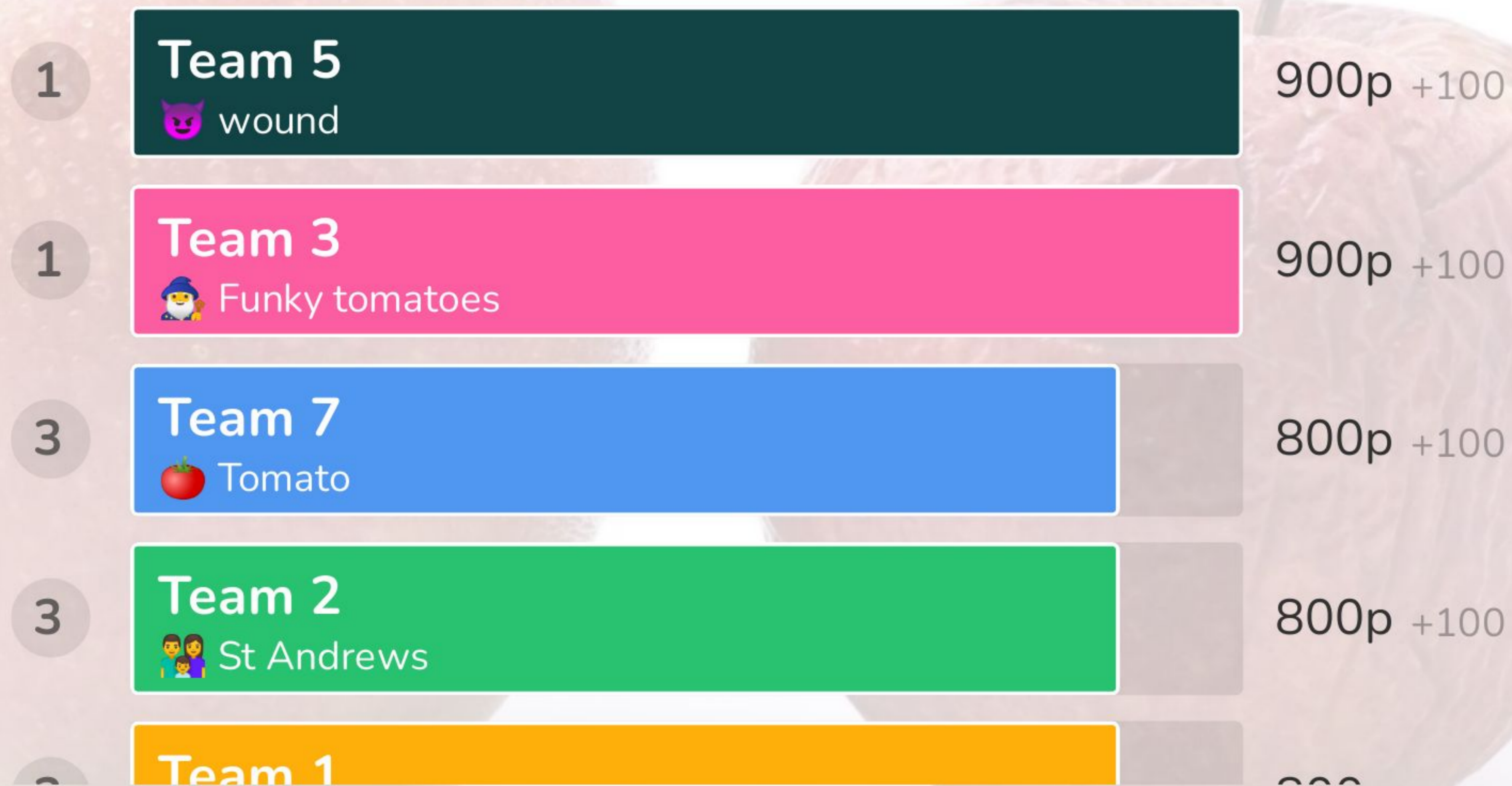
- Educate consumers
- Actively involve the consumer & carers in care decisions where appropriate
- Optimise nutrition & hydration
- Refer to appropriate specialist if impaired sensory perception is problematic (e.g. diabetes)
- Consider possible effects of medications & polypharmacy on the skin

Which of the following preventive measures is appropriate for a patient in a wheelchair with a skin tear on the lower limb?



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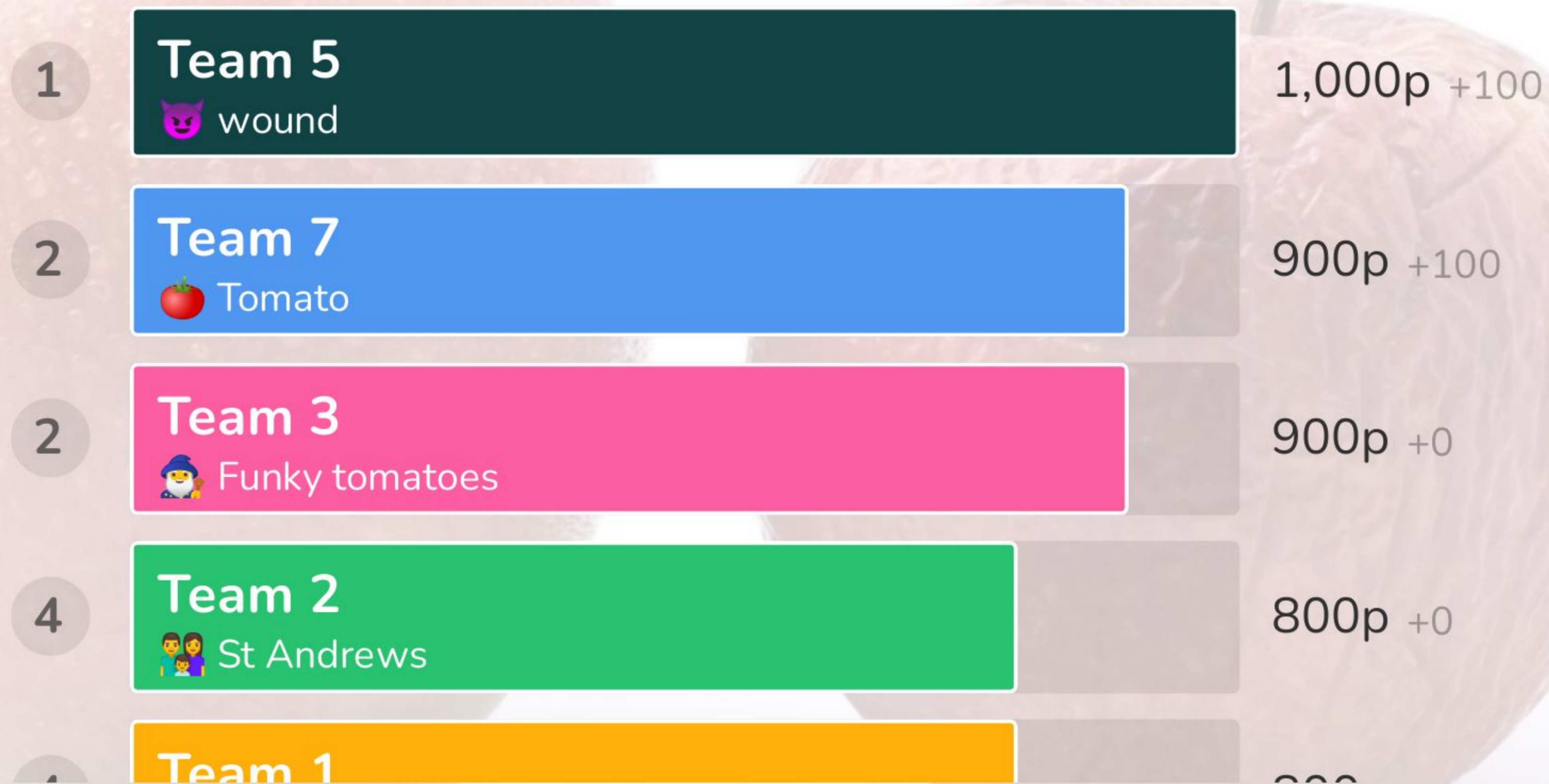
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Why are skin moisturisers applied to prevent skin tears?



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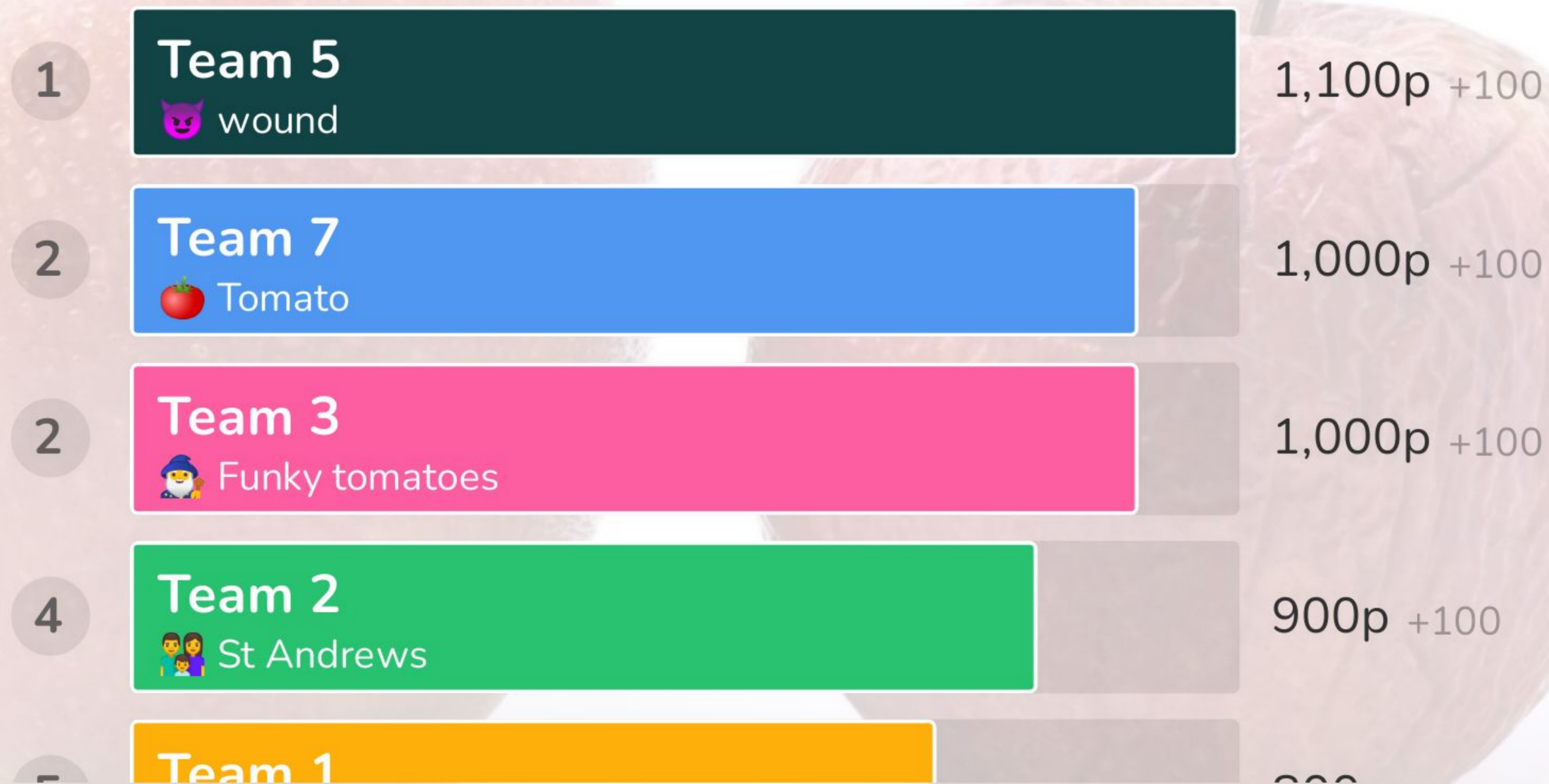
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Mr Scott, 85 years old, has a history of incontinence, dementia, multiple falls, & dependence for all ADLs. Has multiple skin tears on both lower legs & senile purpura on both arms.



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A humectant (e.g. urea) supports skin hydration. Why?

4



✗ It draws water from the epidermis to the dermis to increase levels of...

1



✓ It draws water from the dermis to the epidermis & compensates for the...

0

✗ It traps moisture into the skin & reduces water loss by evaporation

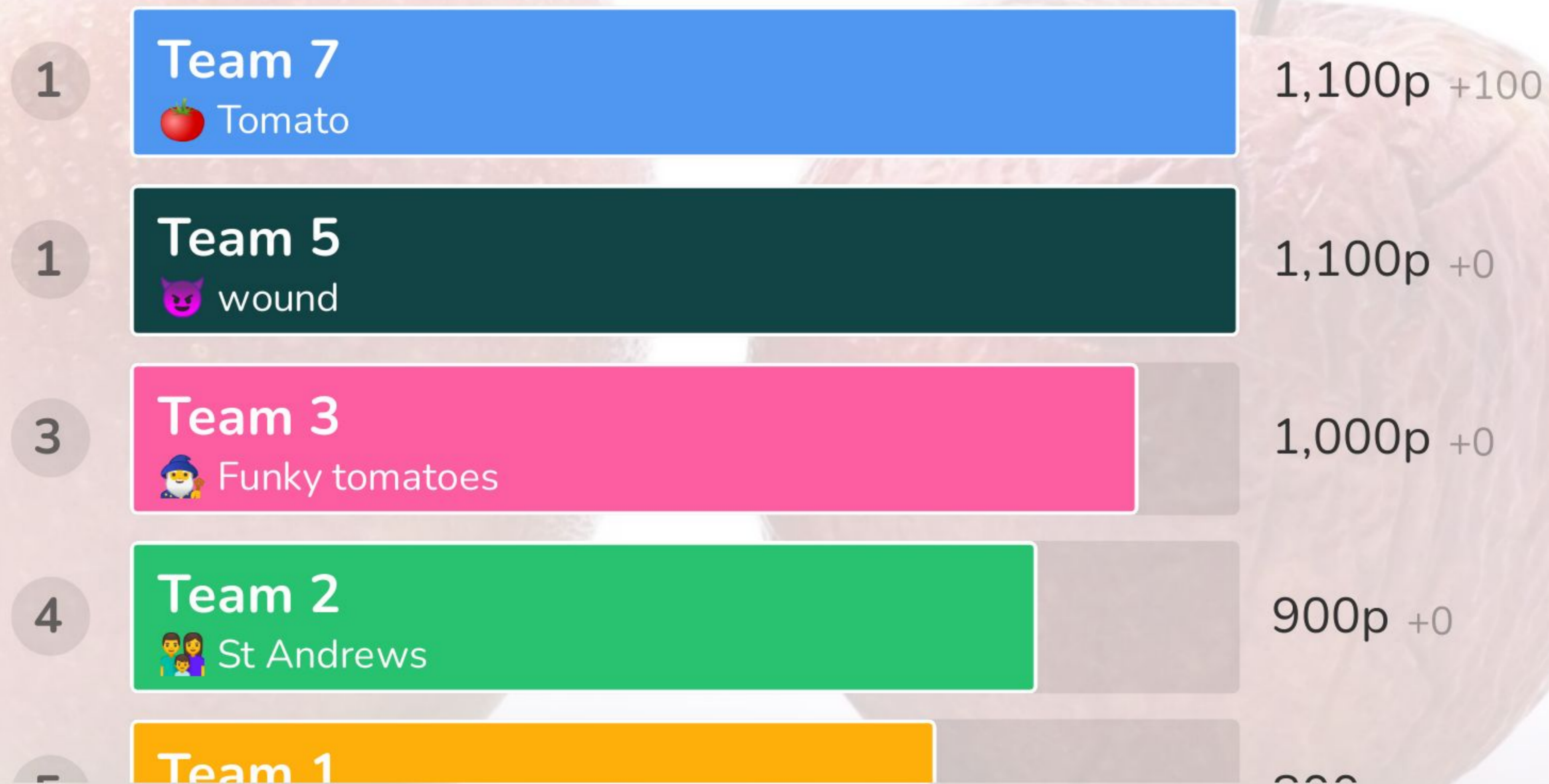
1



✗ It softens the skin to aid absorption of moisture

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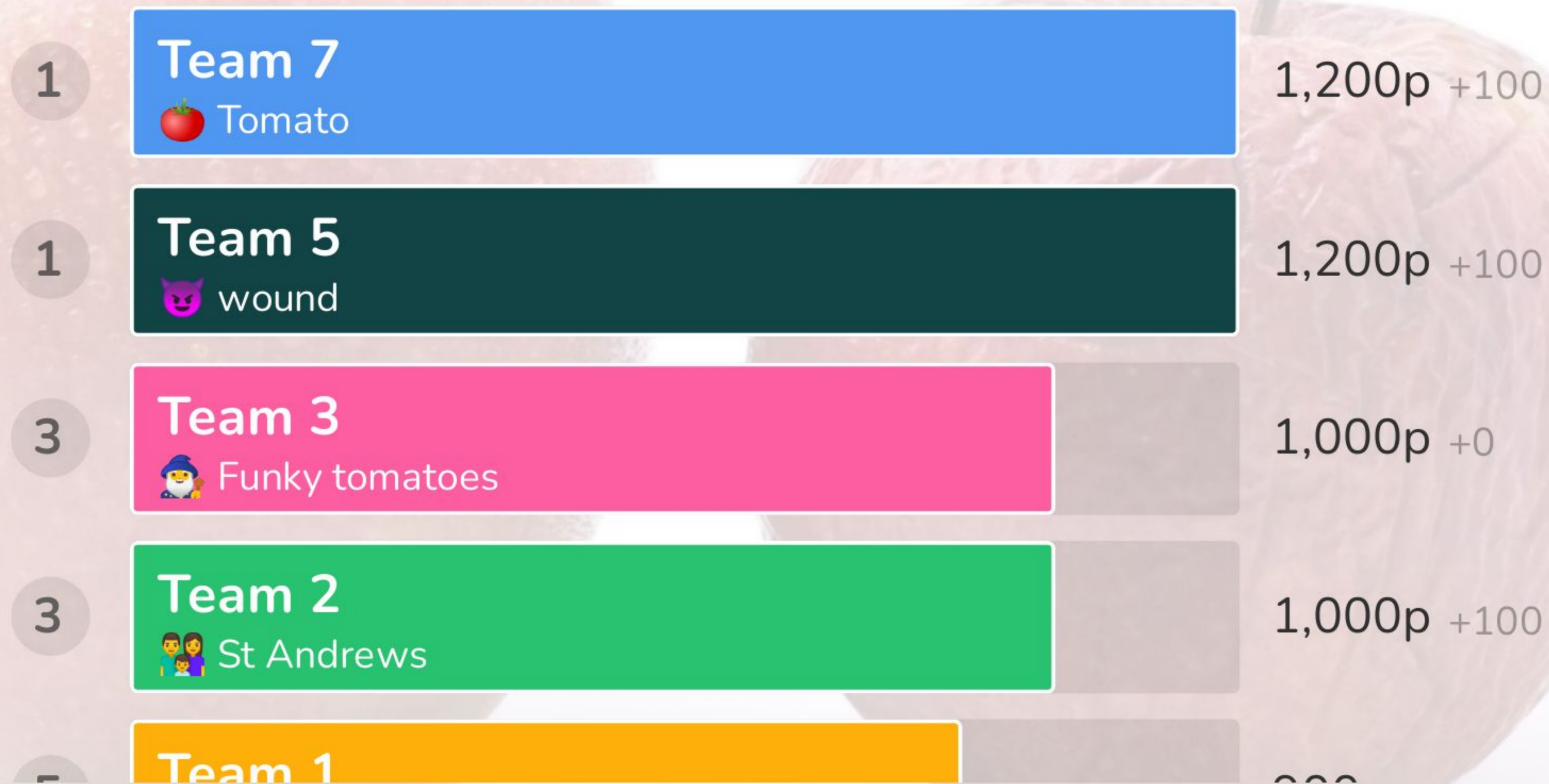
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What is NOT an effective intervention to prevent skin tears?



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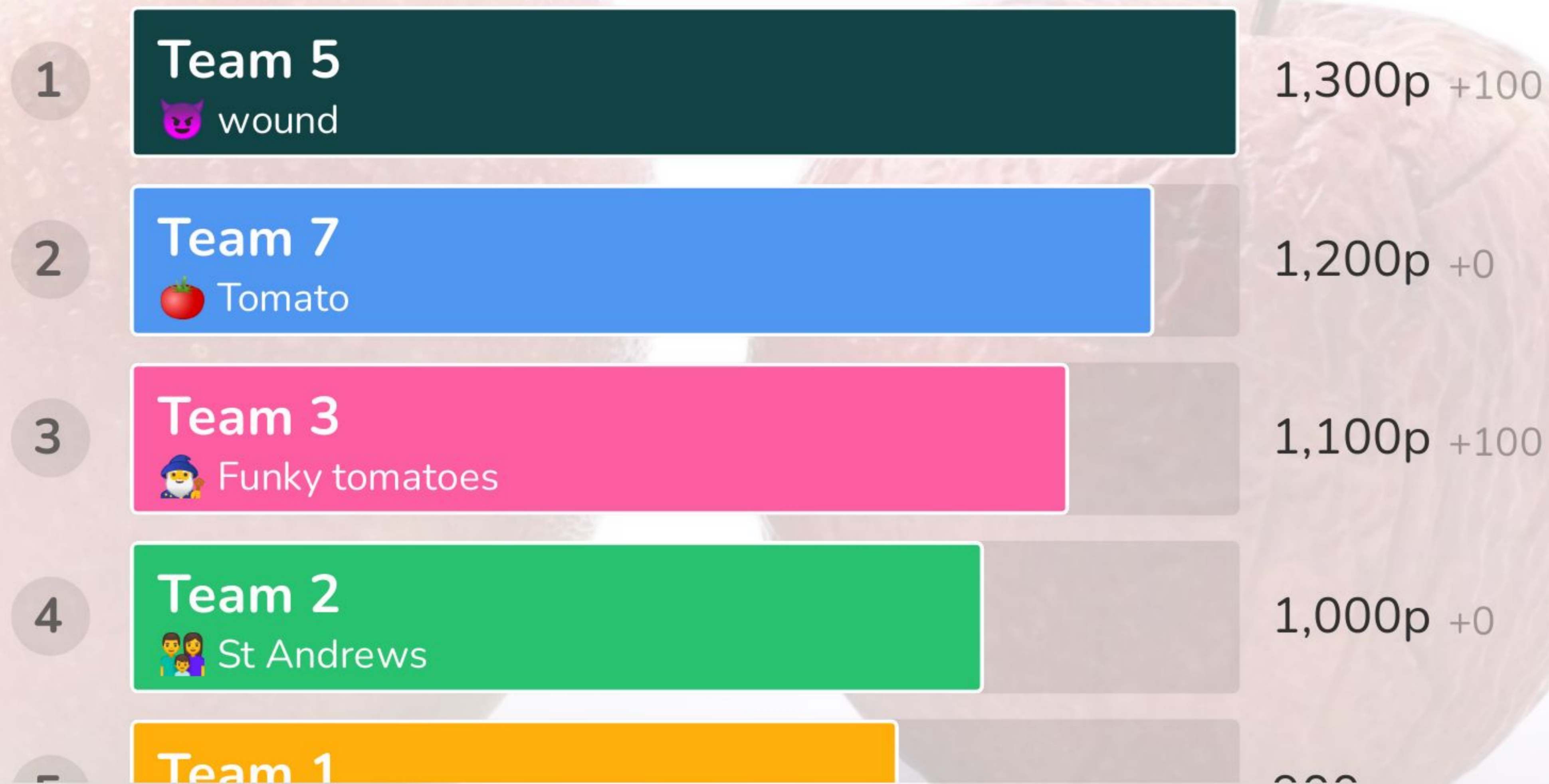
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What is effective to reduce the risk of developing a skin tear?



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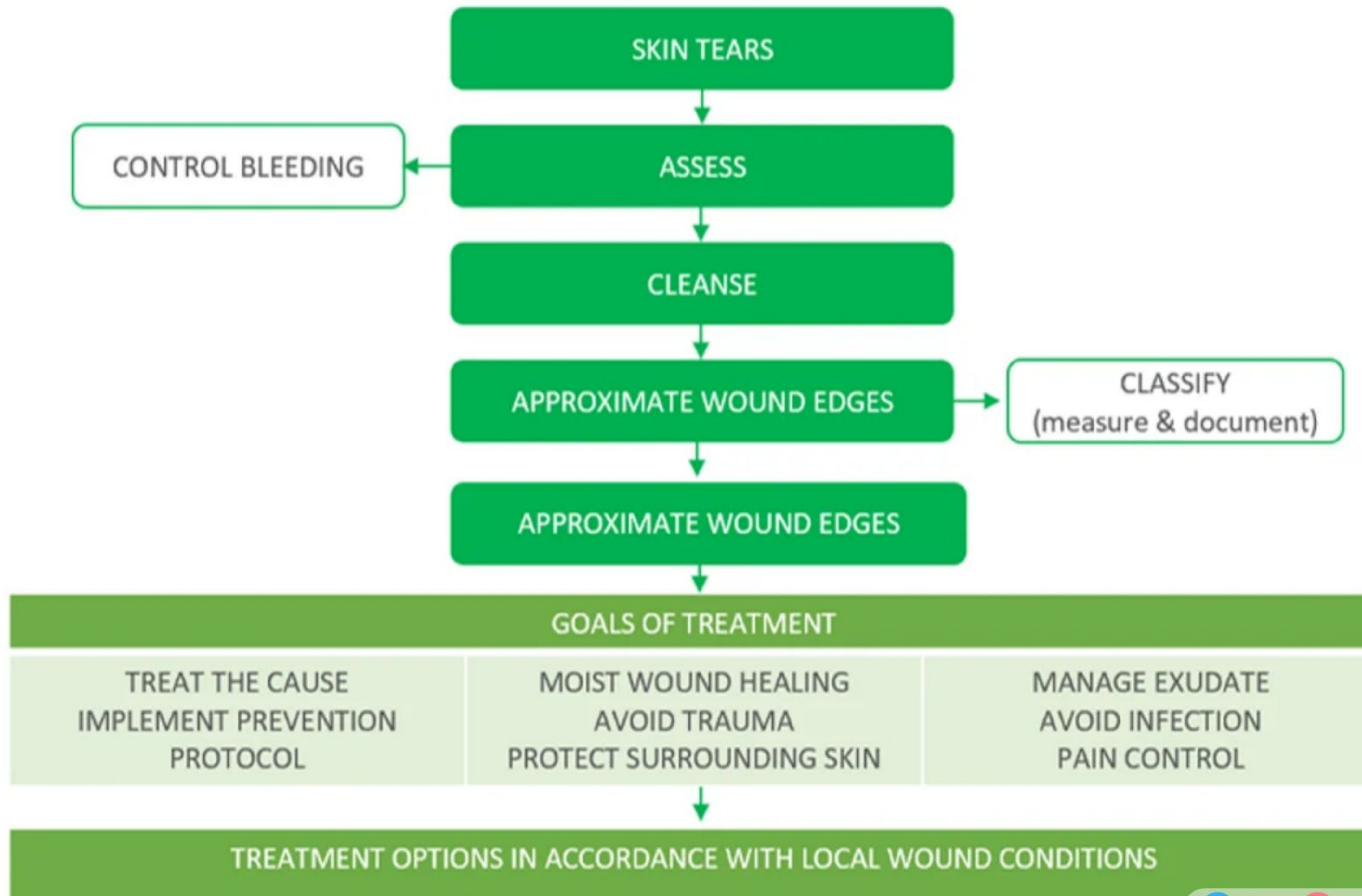


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Management of Skin Tears

Skin Tear Algorithm



Skin tear management

The background of the slide features two apples. The apple on the left is smooth and has a natural, slightly textured skin. The apple on the right is wrinkled, with its skin appearing dry and cracked, which serves as a visual metaphor for skin tears.

Control bleeding

Cleanse & debride

Control exudate

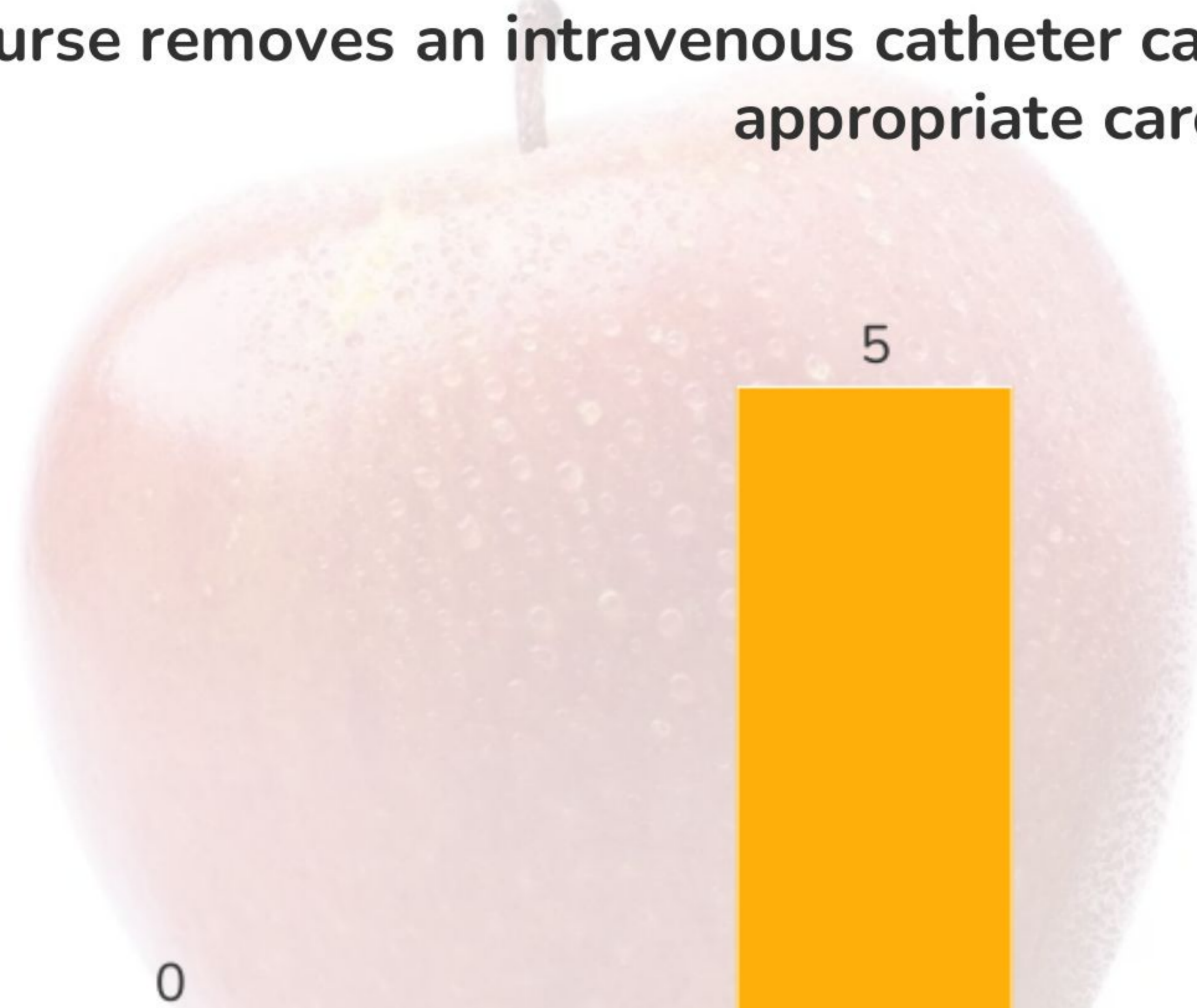
Monitor wound edge/healing



Demonstration

Apply a dressing

A nurse removes an intravenous catheter causing a skin tear. What do you consider to be appropriate care for this patient?



✗ Control bleeding, cleanse wound, reapproximate flap with adhesive...

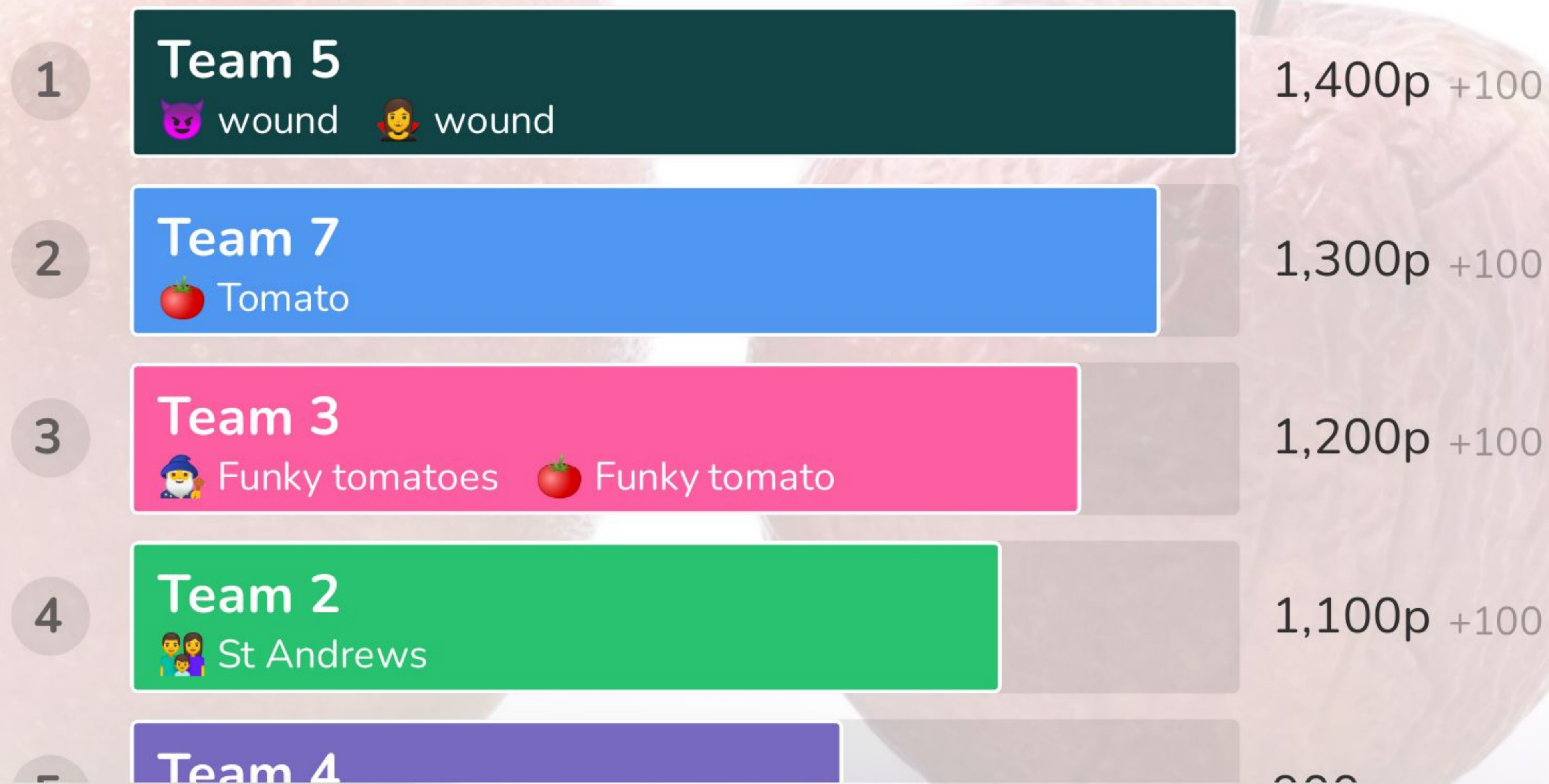
✓ Control bleeding, cleanse wound, reapproximate flap using damp cotton...

✗ Control bleeding, cleanse wound, debride skin flap, manage...

✗ Control bleeding, cleanse, reapproximate flap using gloved finger,...

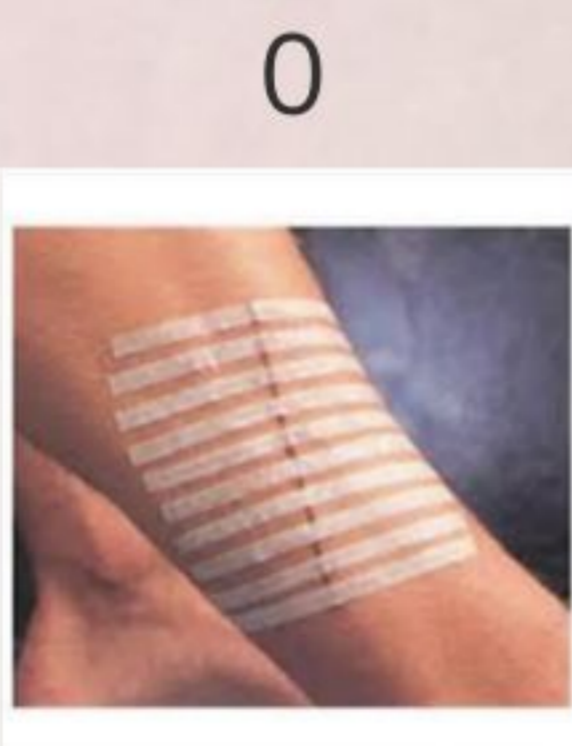
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Which of the following products is recommended for use in skin tears?



✗ Hydrocolloid dressings

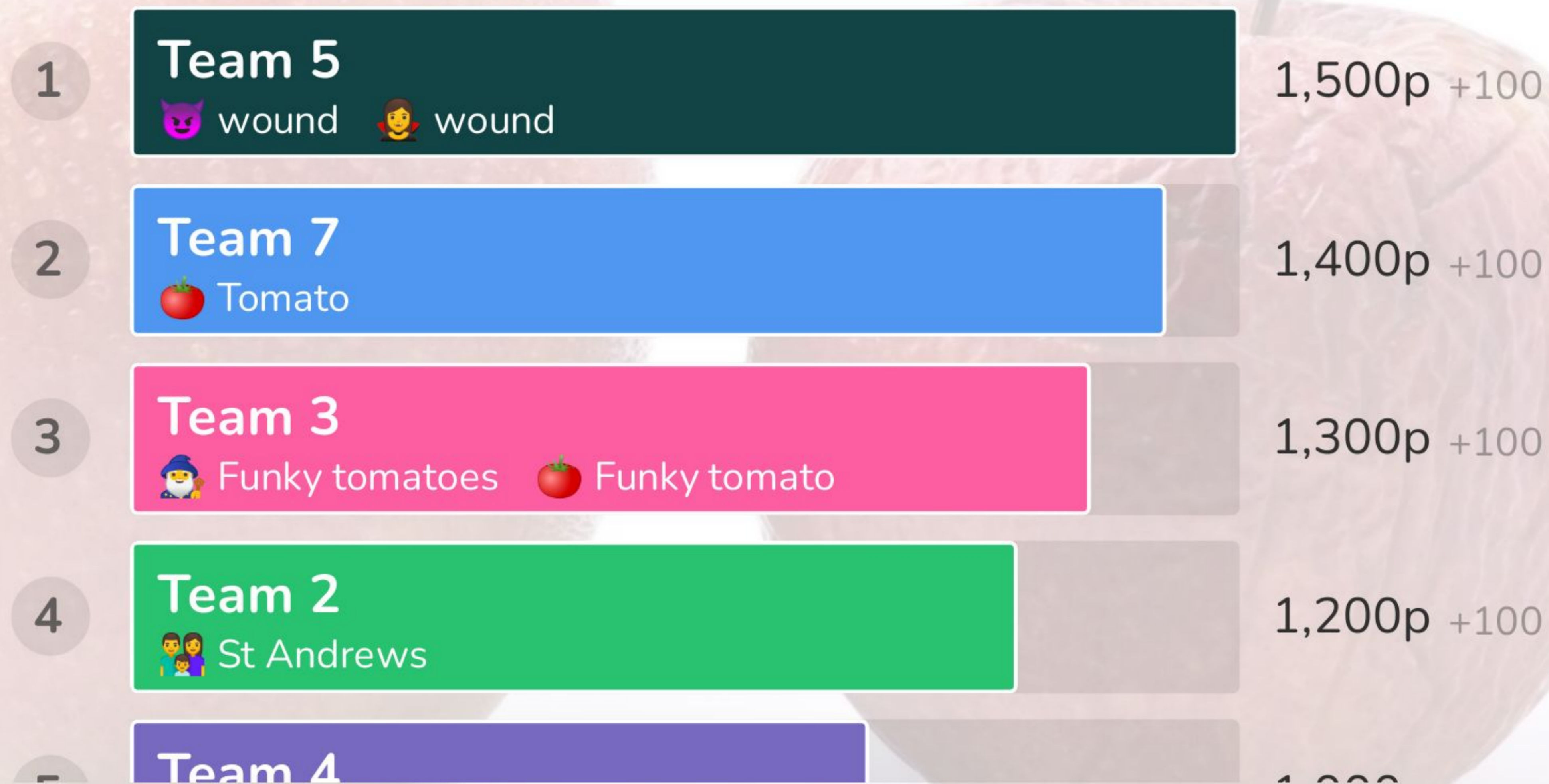
✗ Skin closure strips

✗ Paraffin gauze

✓ Non-adherent dressing with silicone coating

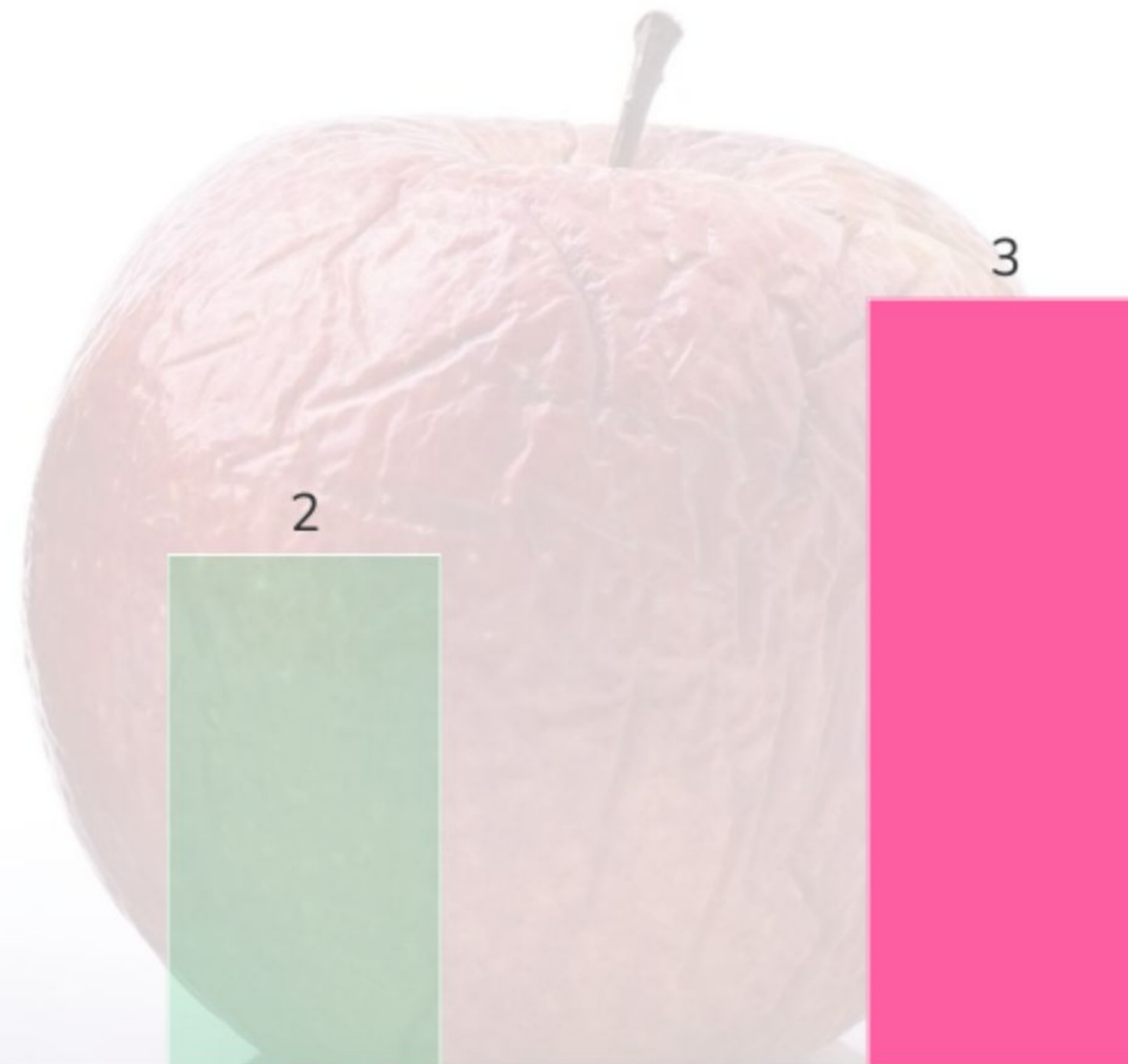
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The ideal dressing for managing skin tears has to:



0
 ✗ 1 & 2

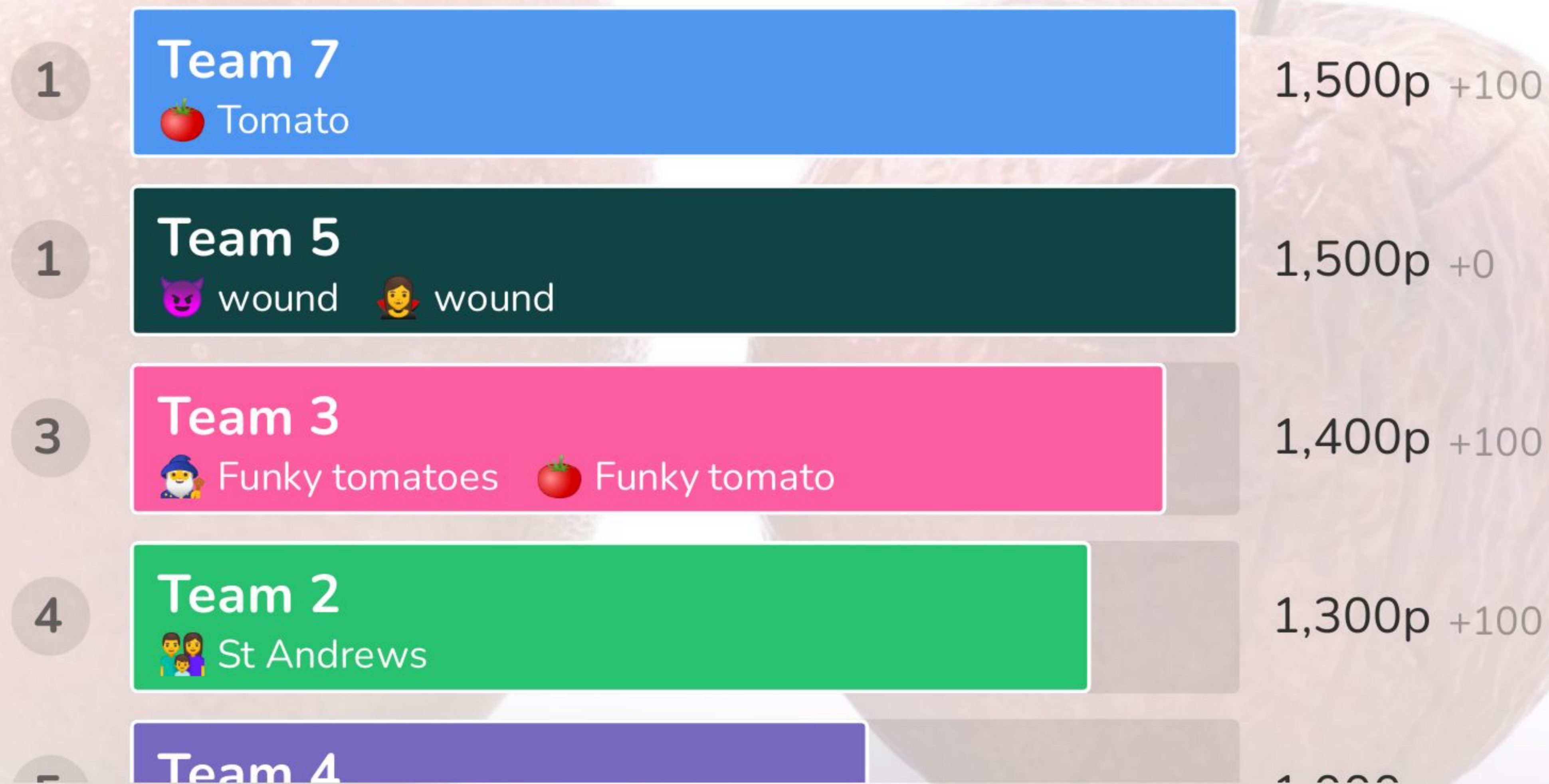
0
 ✗ 2 & 3

✗ 1 & 3

✓ 1, 2 & 3

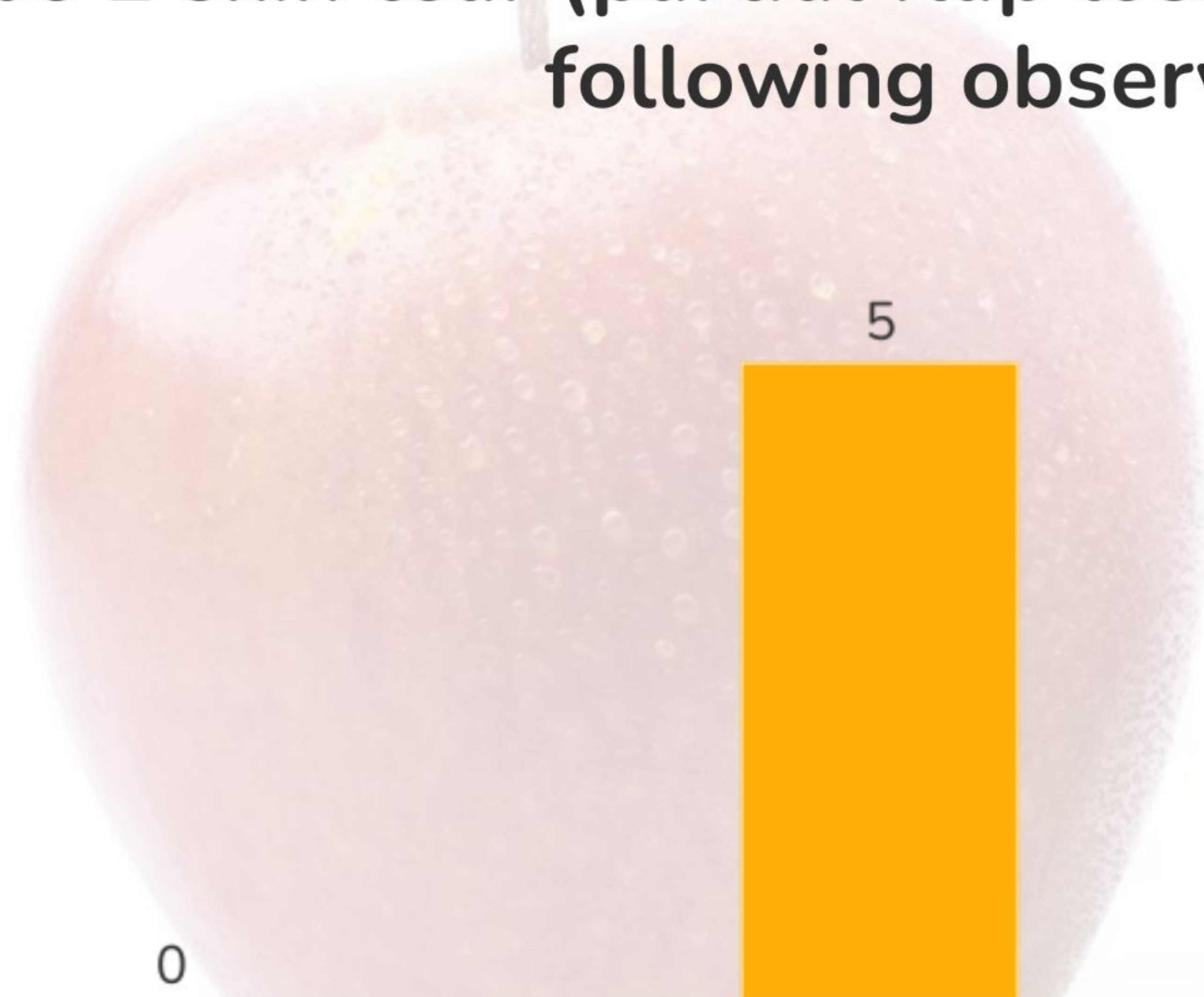
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Type 2 skin tear (partial flap loss). After cleansing the wound, the following observations are made:



✗ Apply a silicone dressing, change dressings every 2-3 days, cleanse...

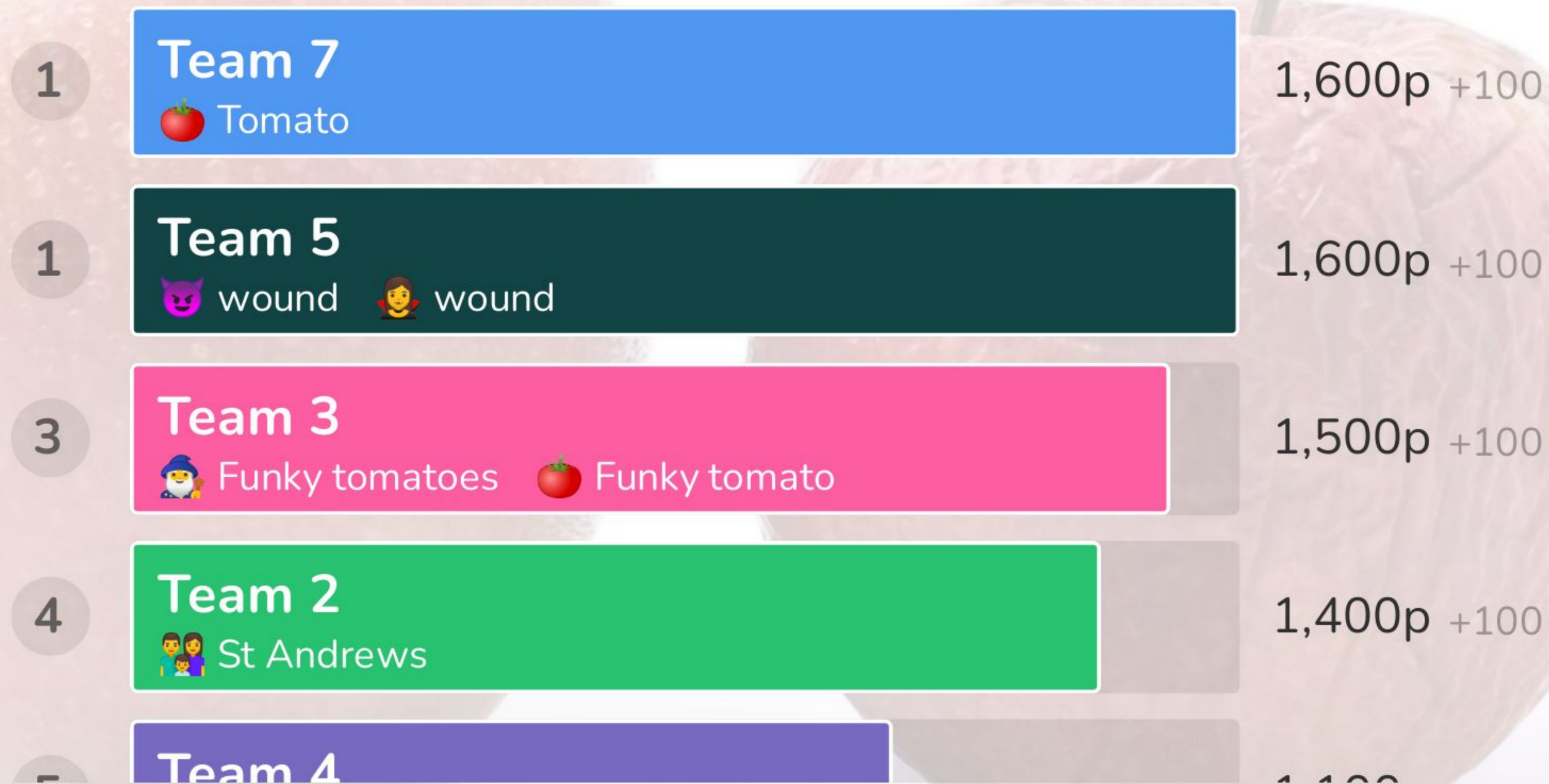
✓ Apply silicone mesh & keep on for 7 days. Cover with secondary...

✗ Apply gauze & secure with paper tape. Replace every 7 days. Cleanse...


✗ Apply wound strips to approximate wound edges. Cover with a secondary...

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Morning Tea & Trade Display

Case Study Activity

Work together to:

- Identify risk factors for the skin tear
- Cleanse the skin tear
- Reapproximate the skin flap
- Classify the skin tear
- Select an appropriate dressing(s)
- Identify other management & prevention strategies
- Present findings to group

Prevention of skin tears



General health

Mobility

Skin

Prevention of skin tears

Risk Factor	Individual	Caregiver
General health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Optimise nutrition & hydration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe environment Educate consumer & caregivers Protect from self-injury Refer to a dietician Review polypharmacy
Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage active involvement Appropriate selection & use of assistive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily skin assessment & monitoring Safe manual handling Falls prevention Pad equipment Trim fingernails & avoid jewellery
Skin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage awareness of medication-induced skin fragility Wear protective clothing Moisturise skin Keep fingernails short 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skin hygiene Avoid adhesives Trim fingernails & avoid jewellery

Consumer engagement

- Moisturise
- Monitor their own skin
- Awareness of potential risks
- Participation in prevention strategies



Which photo is a Type 2 skin tear?

5



0

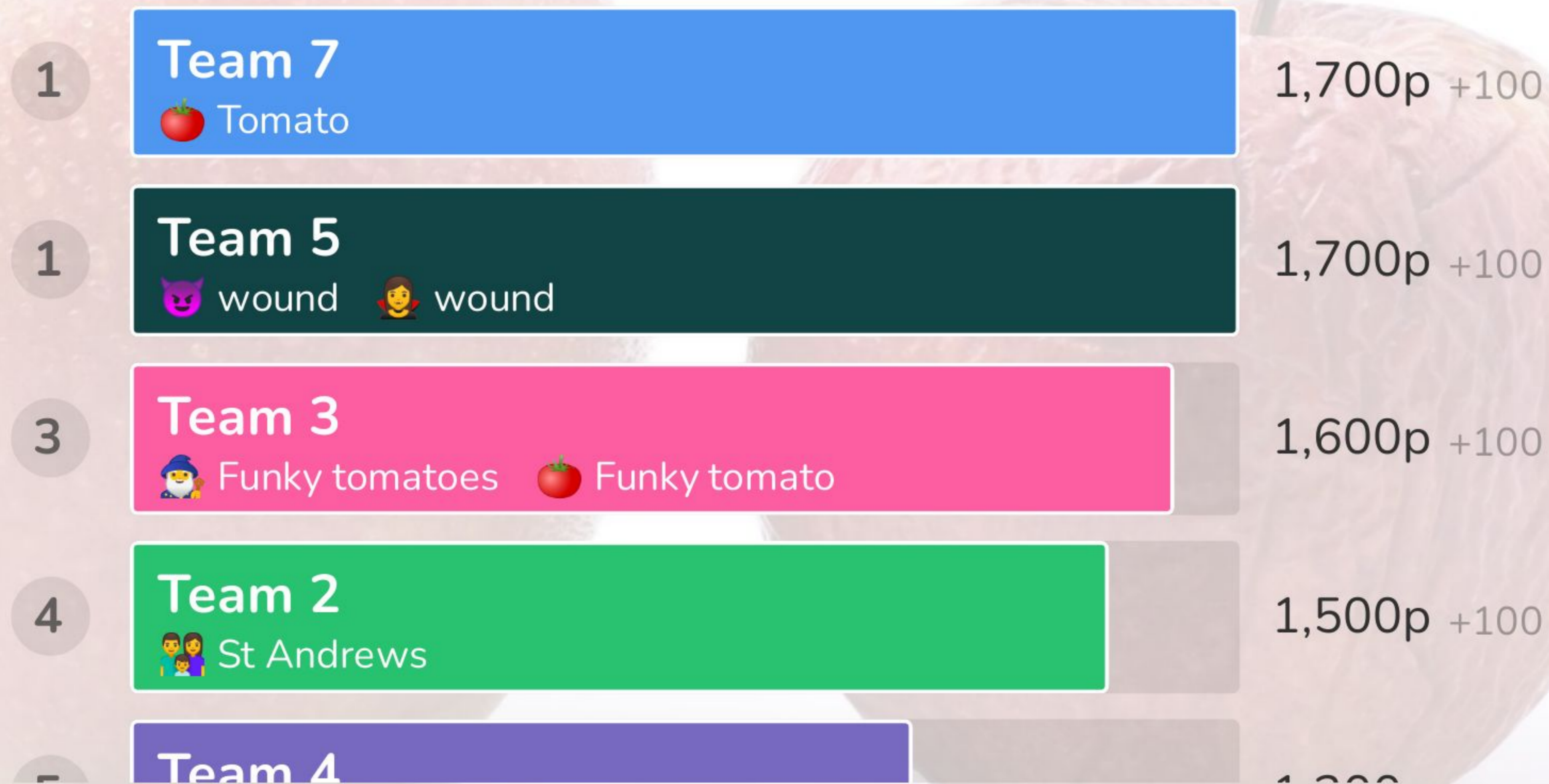


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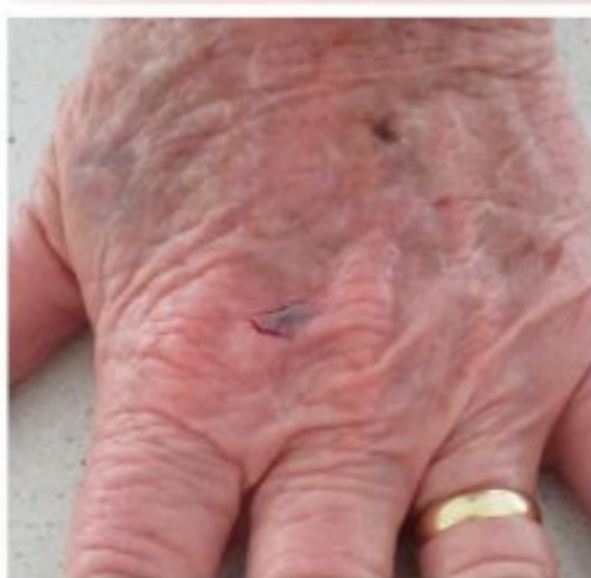
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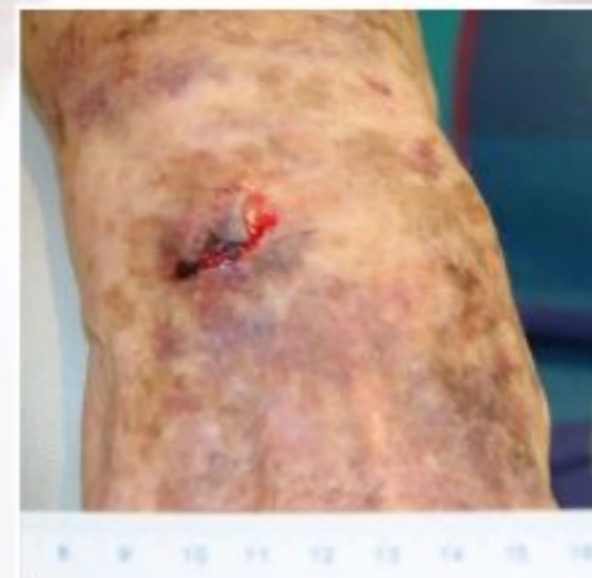
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Which photo is a Type 3 skin tear?

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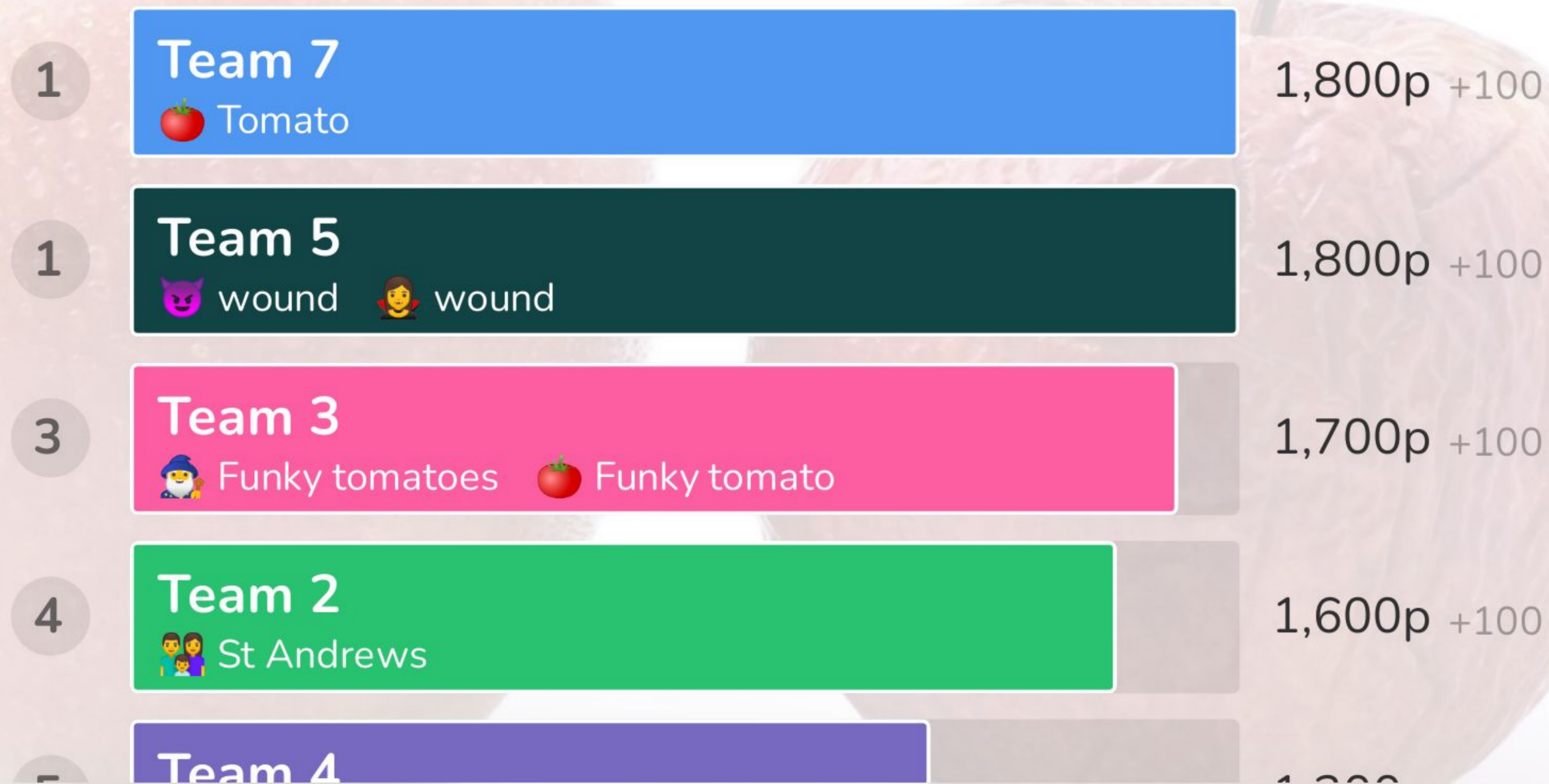


5



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Which photo is a Type 1 skin tear?

5



0



0



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We have 2 winners!

1	Team 1 🍅 Funky tomatoes	1,900p +100
1	Team 5 👩‍🦰 wound 👨‍🦰 wound	1,900p +100
3	Team 3 🐧 Funky tomatoes 🍅 Funky tomato	1,800p +100
4	Team 2 👨‍👩‍👧 St Andrews	1,700p +100
5	Team 4	1,400p

Congrat

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Summary

- Comprehensive assessment of the person and the wound is important
- Helps to identify risk factors for non-healing
- Directs management and prevention strategies
- Classification tools help to improve consistency and communication

Thanks



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Next workshop: Friday 21st June