

### **3. Wound types and categorization**

Wounds can be categorised into acute and chronic.

- Acute wounds comprise of surgical, traumatic and thermal injuries, where it is expected that the healing process should be uneventful and scarring and long term damage minimised.
- Chronic wounds fail to complete the healing process and have an impact on the health status and lifestyle. Chronic wounds include malignant fungating wounds, pressure ulcers, leg ulcers and diabetic foot ulcers. These wounds are the result of systemic disease processes that often require specialist intervention, investigation and treatment of the underlying cause in conjunction with the care of an open wound.

#### **3.1 Open and closed wounds**

Sutures, clips or wound adhesives bring the opposing edges of a wound together and create the moist, warm, clean environment necessary for healing. In this situation, dressings are of secondary importance.

However, on open wounds such as abrasions, burns or pressure ulcers, sutures cannot be used. In such open wounds, the choice of dressing is of critical importance as it can provide the right environment to prevent complications and optimise healing.