Appendix J: Progression from Bacterial Balance to Bacterial Damage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contaminated or colonized</td>
<td>Bacteria are present on the wound surface (contaminated). A steady state of replicating organisms are attaching to the wound tissue and multiplying but they are not associated with tissue damage or delayed healing (colonization).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Critically colonized (local infection, covert infection, increased bacterial burden) | • The bacterial burden in the wound bed is increasing.  
  • Initiates the body’s immune response (inflammation).  
  • The wound is no longer healing at the expected rate; wound size is not decreasing.  
  • Look for the signs outlined in the enabler NERDS. |
| Infected                      | • Bacteria are present within the wound and have spread to the deeper and surrounding tissue. They are multiplying and causing tissue damage.  
  • There is an associated host inflammatory response that has now spread to the deeper tissue and surrounding skin.  
  • The wound is painful and may increase in size with potential satellite areas of breakdown.  
  • Look for the signs outlined in the enabler STONES. |