

Wound care

Wound care

Your wound will have been cleaned and will most often have a dressing. For some wounds, stitches (sutures), thin strips of adhesive tape (steri-strips) and glue are used either alone or in combination. A tetanus booster may be required to be given in the hospital if you have insufficient cover. If local anaesthetic has been used it will wear off in 30-60 minutes and you may need to take painkillers.

Healing

A blood clot and scab will form in the first 24 hours after your wound has been repaired. This should not be cleaned or picked off as it is part of the healing process.

Increasing pain after 24 hours, redness, swelling or pus is abnormal and you should see your local doctor.

For some wounds, particularly those on the face, ointment may be prescribed as part of your wound management plan.

Dressings

A dressing may be used to protect the wound, depending on the site. Your doctor or nurse will advise you when the dressing should be changed or removed.

Suture removal

Suture removal is not usually painful and the length of time sutures are left in varies on the nature and site of the wound. Where there is glue and/or steri-strips, rather than sutures, you can trim the steri-strips but don't pick them off.

“Dos”

Do keep the wound clean and dry.

Do take simple painkillers e.g. panadol, nurofen.

Do elevate (keep raised) the affected part.

Do see your GP or Practice Nurse, as advised, to have your sutures removed.

Take this card with you.

Do give the wound a few days rest after the suture removal. After this, massaging the area with creams (ask your pharmacist) may assist in softening the scar tissue.

“Don'ts”

Don't use antiseptic solution or creams to clean off the blood clot.

Don't pick the scab off.

Don't play with the sutures.

When to seek advice

If your wound becomes more painful or you notice increasing redness or swelling you should contact your GP

Wound care

What to do — please ask your doctor or nurse to complete this section

Dressings

The dressing should be removed in

.....days by

By you

By your doctor/nurse

Sutures (stitches)

You have:

Removable sutures

Dissolvable sutures

You have sutures

The removable sutures should be removed

indays by your doctor/nurse.

You are responsible for making the appointment with your practice nurse for suture removal.

Instructions:

Steri-strips

Your steri-strips can be removed in

.....days

To remove the steri-strips you should soak the wound, with the steri-strips still in place, in cold water and carefully peel them off.

Glue

Glue does not need to be removed. The glue will fall off when the wound is healed. Do not pick the glue.

When glue and steri-strips are used together you can trim this but allow it to come off on its own. Do not soak or pull off.

Other treatment

Antibiotics

Pain relief

Ointment

Other

Seeking help:



In a medical emergency go to your nearest emergency department or call 000.

