

## How to care for your wound following treatment

Caring for your wound is important to help it heal, avoid infection and minimize scarring.

Wounds heal more quickly when they are clean and the edges of the wound are held together.

Depending on the type of wound you have, one of the following methods has been chosen to treat you.

### Stitches (sutures) or Medical Staples

Keep the area around the wound clean and dry for the first 48 hours. After this you can shower and gently pat the wound dry with a clean towel.

The length of time your stitches or staples need to stay in place depends on where the wound is on your body. Before you leave the clinic, the nurse will tell you when the stitches or staples need to be removed.

Do not attempt to remove the stitches or staples yourself.

Number of stitches/staples to remove: \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ days.

### Steristrips

Steristrips are sticky dressings which hold the edges of the wound together to allow it to heal. They should be left on for 5-7 days.

Keep the area clean and dry as much as you can or the dressings may peel off before the wound is healed.

After 5-7 days the dressing will usually peel away by itself. If not, moisten them with luke warm water and carefully peel away.

### Tissue Adhesive (Glue)

Tissue adhesive holds the wound edges together and does not need to be removed. Keep the area clean and dry for 5 days.

The glue will form part of the scab and fall off naturally in about 5-10 days when the wound is healed.

Do not pick or scratch at the glued area as this will cause the wound to open.

Type of dressing applied: \_\_\_\_\_ Date dressing to be changed: \_\_\_\_\_

Continued overleaf...

Originator: Unplanned Care

## **If you have a wound on your hand or fingers**

Dressings applied to hands and fingers should be kept dry and undisturbed. Avoid using waterproof protection (e.g. rubber gloves) unless advised, as this may make the wound damp and increase the risk of infection.

## **Your next appointment**

To have your stitches/staples removed or your dressing changed, contact your GP surgery for an appointment with your practice nurse or return to a Walk in Centre or Minor Injuries Unit.

## **Healing /scarring**

Scars may remain red for six months or more. You can help the healing process by protecting your scar from the sun by using a sunscreen lotion.

## **When to seek advice**

Any type of wound can become infected. Signs of infection include:

- Increased redness or swelling around the wound
- Pus like discharge from the wound
- Heat around the wound
- Increased pain or tenderness
- Fever.

If you are concerned your wound may have become infected contact the Walk in Centre & Minor Injuries Unit.