



Sutured or Stapled Wound Care

Sutures are stitches that can be used to close wounds. Wound care helps prevent pain and infection.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Your stitches/staples should be removed in _____ days by your healthcare provider. If you have been given a staple remover, make sure you take this with you to your healthcare provider for staple removal.
- Keep the area of your wound and any dressing applied to it clean and dry for _____ hours or ____ days.
- Change the bandage (dressing) every _____ hours or _____ days. If the dressing sticks, moisten it with soapy water and gently remove it. Apply ointment on the wound only as directed.
- Follow your discharge instructions for how often to change your bandage (dressing). In most cases, after 48 hours, remove the dressing; gently wash the area with mild soap and water once a day, or as directed. Rinse off the soap. Pat the area dry with a clean towel. Do not rub the wound. This may cause bleeding.
- Rest and elevate the injured area until the pain and swelling has improved.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your health care practitioner.
- Avoid stretching a sutured wound.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow.
- Follow up with your health care provider for suture removal as directed.
- Once healed, use sunscreen on your wound for the next 3 to 6 months so the scar will not darken.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your wound becomes red, swollen, hot, or tender.
- You have increasing pain in the wound.
- You have a red streak that extends from the wound.
- There is pus or a bad smell coming from the wound.
- You have a fever.
- You have persistent bleeding from the wound.

This general advice cannot cover all possible problems. If there is concern, please contact your physician, healthcare provider or the Emergency Department without delay.