

Wound Care Advice Following Orthopaedic Surgery

Information for patients

Wound care

This leaflet will give you advice on wound care following your orthopaedic surgery.

Good wound care

Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and water before touching the wound. Good wound care is an important part of your recovery at home, in order to prevent infection and ensure wound healing.

This involves keeping your wound dry and clean by using dressings until the wound has healed. If there is leakage from the wound, a district nurse may be required to support you at home.

You should also be careful not to soak in water for long periods as this can cause a delay or breakdown in healing of your surgical wound.

Healing/Scarring:

As part of the normal healing process your wound may feel numb, tingly, lumpy or itchy. Scarring does occur in surgical wounds and it can be red for 6 months or more.

Things to look out for:

- Increased redness or swelling around the wound
- Pus-like discharge from the wound
- Increasing pain
- Increase in body temperature.

If you notice any of these symptoms, please contact your GP.

Wound Closure

There are several types of wound closure:

Steristrips:

These are strips of sticky paper that hold the wound together to let it heal. These should be left on the wound for 10 to 14 days. Keep the area dry or they may peel off before the wound has had a chance to heal. When wound healing has taken place, usually 10-14 days post-surgery, the steristrips will usually peel away by themselves. Moisten for ten minutes and carefully peel off. If you'd rather a nurse removed these, you can make an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP.

Sutures/Clips:

The wound should be kept clean and dry until the suture/clips are removed. **Before you are discharged from hospital, a nurse will write on this sheet when the sutures/clips should be removed.**

Keep the wound covered whilst you have sutures/clips in place to prevent them being pulled out or caught by mistake.

Sutures/clips will be removed by a practice nurse and you will need to make an appointment for this. Clip removers/suture removal kit and dressings should be given to you when you are discharged from hospital.

If you have any concerns out of hours please contact NHS24 for advice on **111**

You can also contact the ward you were discharged from for advice:

Ward 108: **07816 257 539**

Ward 109: **07816 257 597**

Major Trauma Ward: **07816 257 600**

Ward 209: **07816 257 598**

Ward 220: **07816 257 601**

Practice Nurse Appointment (if applicable)

Please remove this patient's sutures/Clips in days.

Thank you,

Ward Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

