

Wound care advice following your surgical procedure

(UHB staff to tick as appropriate)

Your sutures (stitches)

- You will be visited by your district nurse on _____ for your sutures to be removed.
- Your sutures need to be removed in _____ days. Please contact your General Practitioner's (GP) surgery to arrange removal.
- Your sutures need to be removed in _____ days. This will be done at your hospital appointment on the (date) _____ at (time) _____ at _____ (state hospital site).
- Your sutures do not need to be removed. Most dissolvable sutures start to break down with 1-2 weeks; however, in some cases it could take several months before they disappear completely. After the wound has healed, it may be possible for your GP practice nurse to remove the loose ends to speed up the process. Please contact your GP if you would like to discuss this further.
- Your wound has been closed with adhesive skin closures (e.g. Steri-Stips™/ butterfly stitches) which will need to be removed after five days. Please keep them dry until they are due to be removed. Use warm water and ensure the adhesive skin closures are wet before you slowly remove them.
- Your wound has been closed with glue, which will dissolve naturally. Please avoid brushing, combing or rubbing the affected area, and keep it dry for five days.

Your clips

- Your clips need to be removed in _____ days. Please contact your GP surgery to arrange removal. A removal kit has been provided.

Your dressing

Your dressing needs to be kept clean and dry. If you have been told that your dressing is water-proof, you can shower with it on, but make sure all the edges are stuck down firmly first.

If the dressing gets wet, comes off before it is due to be removed, or comes off before your wound check, please replace it with the spare dressing provided. If you do not have any spare dressings please see your GP practice nurse or if out of hours please visit your local walk-in centre.

- Please remove your dressing after _____ days /hours.
- Please do not remove your dressing. It will be removed for you when you go for your wound check appointment.
- Please remove the outer dressing after _____ days/hours, but leave the smaller dressing in place. This will be removed when you attend your wound check appointment.

Signs of infection

If you think your wound may be infected, contact your GP surgery or local pharmacist for advice as soon as possible. Signs of infection may include the following symptoms:

- Increased pain or tenderness around the wound site
- Localised swelling
- Redness and heat around the wound site
- Discharge (pus)
- Feeling feverish (you may feel shivery and hot or cold).

How to care for your wound

It's not always necessary for a nurse to check your wound after you have been discharged from hospital; therefore it's important that, once the dressings have been removed by a healthcare professional, you look at your wound on a daily basis. You are also advised to carry out the following:

- Once the dressing has been removed by a healthcare professional you should wash the wound with care. You may prefer to run lukewarm water over the area or have a shower. Avoid soaking such as bathing or swimming for at least 10–14 days after your procedure or until you have had a wound check.
- When drying your wound you are advised to pat it dry with a clean towel.
- Do not rub your wound when washing as this can delay the healing process.
- Refrain from using perfumed soaps and body creams on the wound until it is completely healed .
- Patients with abdominal wounds should support their wound with their hands should they need to cough
- If the wound should bleed apply firm pressure with a clean cloth for 10 minutes. If the wound is on your hand or arm raise it above your head. If you have a lower limb wound please lie and raise the affected leg above the level of your heart, this should stop the bleeding.
- If after 10 minutes the bleeding has not reduced, or you experience any severe bleeding, please dial 999 or attend your local Emergency Department.

Contact Details

If you have any questions or concerns contact:

(please circle and complete as appropriate)

Ward _____ Your G.P Practice _____

Tel: _____

If you have a concern outside of your G.P working hours please call 111 (NHS direct) or visit your local walk in centre, in an emergency please visit your local Emergency Department.

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