



Wound Care Instructions

1. Remove the dressing after 24 hours.
2. Cleanse the wound or suture line with soap and water or 3% hydrogen peroxide (available without prescription at any drug store) using Q-tips, cotton balls, or gauze. The purpose of this is to prevent excessive crust or “scab” from accumulating.
3. Apply Polysporin ointment generously to the wound after cleansing. It is also available without a prescription. Neosporin ointment may substituted as long as you are not allergic to it (some people develop itchiness or redness from Neosporin). These ointments contain antibiotics to help prevent infection. They also keep your wounds greasy and moist which speeds healing. Try not to let a dry scab form, as this will slow down healing.
4. Wounds or sutures lines may then be covered with a dry dressing such as a band aid. Some wounds may be left open to air as long as Polysporin ointment is applied first.
5. **Repeat steps 1 through 4 two times a day.** Continue these steps for one week after stitches are taken out (if applicable) or until the skin has grown over, whichever is longer. The total wound care regimen is *usually* around two weeks.
6. Avoid strenuous activities that may pull or damage the wound. Stretching the wound may contribute to increased scarring or breakage of sutures.
7. If the wound becomes exceptionally red, swollen, or painful, or if it begins to drain excessive amounts of pus, PLEASE CALL US.
8. Return to clinic on day of your appointment for removal of stitches or for follow up of your wound.
9. You may take Tylenol as need for pain provided you have not had problems with Tylenol in the past.
10. It is common for wounds to ooze or bleed, especially during the first few hours after surgery. This is best controlled by applying constant firm pressure to the bleeding site with a clean bandage or wash rag for 15 minutes (no peeking underneath early!). If bleeding continues, call or come to the office. If very severe, go to an emergency room (this is rarely necessary).
11. Try to avoid smoking; it is known to interfere with good wound healing.
12. We will call with the biopsy results as soon as available.

BIOPSY FEES: There is a separate charge for having the pathologist process, make slides, and examine your skin sample to make a diagnosis. You will receive a separate bill from the laboratory if your insurance does not cover the fee.

How to remove your stitches (sutures) yourself if you prefer:

1. Wash your hand with soap and water, then dry with a clean towel.
2. Clean the site with soap and water, then dry with a clean towel.
3. You should use small scissors (such as manicure scissors) and tweezers, cleaning them with alcohol before using.
4. Using the tweezers, gently lift the suture knot up and hold firmly.
5. **Cut the suture on one side of the knot only. Do not cut through the knot.**
6. Pull up on the remaining knot with the tweezers to remove the suture.
7. Once the sutures are removed, if there are no open areas, scabs, or bleeding, you can stop wound care and leave the area open to the air. If you see small sores or open areas of skin, continue the wound care (as outlined on the front on the page) until the skin is pink and healed.

