

## WOUND CARE AFTER REMOVAL OF SUTURES OR STAPLES

Wound care after suture removal is just as important as it was prior to removal of the stitches. Take good care of the wound so it heals nicely to a smooth scar which is flat and level with the adjacent skin. The last thing you would like to have is a problem with the surgical wound when you are still recovering from the impacts of surgery.

Stitches or staples are usually removed within 14 days, depending on the location of the wound. Your doctor will tell you when to return to have your stitches removed. Sterile forceps or tweezers are used to pick up the knot of each stitch which is cut with scissors and pull the stitch out. You may feel a slight tug as the stitch comes out. A clean dressing is applied at the end of the procedure to enable you to go home.

Normally you should remove the dressing on the very next day and wash the area with clean water and soap. You should be able to take shower at the same time. You can apply coconut oil on and around the wound before washing and after that any moisturiser is applied to keep the area clean and soft. Use clean and washed garments every time you change it. You can keep the wound exposed to air if possible. For wounds around the foot you may keep it covered with clean cotton socks to prevent direct contact with dust and contaminants.

A few drops of discharge for first couple of days are normal, but if it continues it is better to consult the doctor.

Regular application of ice pack around the wound is good as it reduces the inflammation, never apply any hot fomentation around surgical wounds.

Do not scratch the wound with nails as it may cause infection which is a serious complication. In case of itching you can gently rub with fingers for few times.

Do not move or apply too much pressure on or around the wound as it may cause it to split open. At the time of suture removal, the wound has only regained about 5%-10% of its strength. Therefore, protect the wound from injury during the next month.

**You should immediately contact your doctor or the nearest emergency unit of a hospital if:**

- The wound splits open
- There is increased pain along with redness and warmth around the wound
- There is continuous bloody or yellowish discharge from the wound
- There is bad smell around the wound.



**Figure 1: Clean surgical wound**



**Figure 2: Infected surgical wound**

In case of any doubt about your surgical wound for the first few days after surgery do not hesitate to contact us at 8972176765.