

Removal of Stitches

Your healthcare professional will advise which of the following apply

Keep your dressing in place and dry for _____

Please make an appointment with your practice nurse in _____ days.

Date _____

Time _____

Your stitches will need to be removed in the Out Patient Dept in _____ days.

Date _____

Time _____

What to do if your wound opens before or after stitch removal

Please contact our Out Patient nurses for advice if you have any concerns regarding your wound on **0114 2632175** or **0114 2630330** Extension **7310**



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Skin Surgery with Stitches

A Patient Guide



Part of Aspen Healthcare
www.aspen-healthcare.co.uk

Skin Surgery with Stitches

This fact sheet aims to answer any questions you may have after your skin surgery. If you require any further information or have any concerns please contact our Out Patient nurses on 0114 2632175.

- Local anaesthetic will usually wear off in about 1 to 3 hours. During this time do not exert yourself and avoid doing any strenuous activity as this may increase the risk of bleeding.
- If you are in pain we recommend you take Paracetamol (2 tablets of 500mg) which can be repeated after 4 to 6 hours (maximum of 8 tablets in 24 hours.)
- It is important to eat a well-balanced diet which will aid your general health and wellbeing.

Frequently Asked Questions

Bleeding

If you start to bleed or notice blood on the dressing do not panic. Slight oozing or spotting of blood on the dressing is normal. However, if the bleeding persists apply firm, continual pressure to the area for 10 minutes (this will usually stop most bleeding.) An icepack wrapped in a tea towel and pressed firmly against the wound is ideal.

DO NOT remove your dressing. If possible, elevate the bleeding point and contact our Out Patient nursing team for further advice or if you feel that you need your dressing changed.

What should I do if I take medication such as Aspirin, Warfarin or Clopidogrel (blood thinners?)

You are at a slightly higher risk of bleeding but do not stop taking your medication unless you have been advised to do so by a medical professional. Some swelling and bruising may happen but this should improve over the week.

My swelling is not improving

Please contact your GP or our out patient nurses if you are concerned about swelling.

Infection

We take every precaution to prevent a wound infection before, during and after your operation. Despite this some wounds will still become infected. Symptoms of an infected wound include redness, increase in pain, swelling, discharge and smell. You may also experience a fever or feel generally unwell.

If you have any of the above symptoms please contact your GP or our Out Patient nurses.

Scarring

Every effort will be made to minimise the scar, however, scars can be unpredictable. You should avoid physical activities that put strain on the stitches for 2-3 weeks post surgery. Straining the stitches may lead to the wound opening and this could affect the healing of the wound.

After your stitches have been removed, massage the scar using petroleum jelly or E45 cream for 5 minutes twice a day for a month. This will help to improve the way the scar looks. Some people will develop a slight reaction to the stitches under the skin which will make the scar feel lumpy. This will settle in time.

Numbness in the area of the scar can occur. Usually this will improve over time but can last up to 2 years or longer.

Smoking can affect your healing and you are advised to stop or at least reduce your daily amount of cigarettes for the duration of your healing.

Alcohol can increase the risk of bleeding from the wound and you are advised to avoid alcohol for 24 hours after your surgery.