



Post-Op Wound Care - General Surgery

- Surface clips / sutures must be removed as follows: from face – after 5 – 7 days; anywhere else – after 7 – 10 days. (Can be done at Out-Patients, wound clinic or by a pharmacy sister / GP. You may remove your stitches should you feel comfortable to do so). Deeper surgeries will be closed with dissolving sutures.
- If a clip or stitch pulls out or loosens – if the wound does not open completely there is no need to worry, keep the opening covered & pulled together with a Steri-Strip or plaster. If you are concerned please contact us for advice/recommendation.
- Dressing – for both stitches & clips, keep on for 4-5 days, then as required. Only soap and water are needed to clean the wound. You may need to re-apply a dressing for comfort or to prevent soiling of clothing. You may shower post-op but do not get the dressing/s wet!
- Scar – to prevent scarring, once the wound has completely healed, rub gently with oil or cream daily; and always apply sunscreen. It is the massaging that really lessens scarring; keep doing this until the scar has matured or disappeared.
- Discomfort – if after 7-10 days there is still wound discomfort, pain or swelling please phone for a check-up, visit your GP or go to Casualty.
- Pain – If you were given a script by Dr, use as prescribed. Otherwise, OTC painkillers may be used as required, however please check with Dr first or explain to pharmacist what tablets you are already using as certain medications will clash and make you ill! Only use a medicated ointment directly on the wound if one has been prescribed.
- Physical activity – mobilize gently as early as possible. If you been given exercises by a physiotherapist, do them as instructed.
- Diet - usually a normal diet can be followed, however if you have had laryngeal/ oesophageal/ gastric/ abdominal/ colorectal surgery, you need to check with Dr or the dietician.
- **Avoid constipation!** Analgesia can cause constipation, therefore it's recommended you take 1 sachet of Movicol (stool softener available OTC) daily, for as long as you are using the prescribed analgesia. Constipation will make you feel sick and feverish and cause pain.
- Test results – if applicable - available after 5-7 working days. If there is an area of concern, Dr will call you.
- Follow-up – not necessary unless specifically instructed by Dr or unless there is an issue with the wound.
- Let rooms know if: there is increased, pain, swelling, redness, oozing or consistent fever of 38° or higher, jaundice. If this occurs after hours or if Dr is not available, please go to Casualty!

Please contact us should you have any queries that we have not covered here.