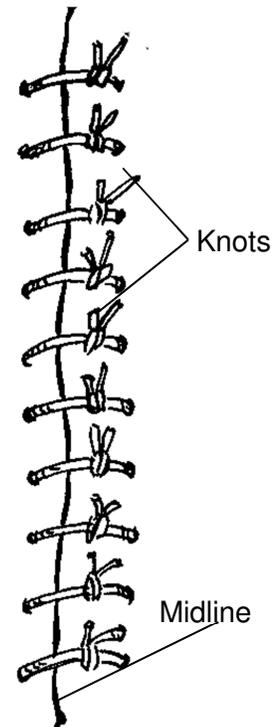


Sutured Wound Care

Your child received stitches. His or her wound will need to be cared for at home. Keeping the wound clean even after it is healed will affect the way the scar looks. Please follow these steps to reduce scarring (follow **only** the directions checked below):

Suture (Stitches) Removal and Follow-Up
<input type="checkbox"/> The stitches will not need to be removed. They will break down and come out or dissolve by themselves. This will take about _____ days or _____ weeks. <input type="checkbox"/> The stitches should be removed in _____ days. Call your child's doctor for an appointment to have the stitches removed.
Bandages
<input type="checkbox"/> No bandage is needed. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep the bandage on until the doctor removes it. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep the bandage on for 24 hours before you remove it to clean the wound. After cleaning, place a clean bandage over the wound. <input type="checkbox"/> Change the bandage if it gets wet or dirty. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep the skin adhesive strips on until they fall off on their own. You may trim the edges if they curl up from the skin. If the area gets wet, blot it dry with a soft towel. Do not rub. <input type="checkbox"/> There is skin glue over the stitches. Please leave this glue in place until it falls off on its own in 2-4 weeks



Picture 1 The sutured wound. Clean in a direction that keeps the knots away from the mid-line of the wound.

Wound and Skin Cleaning

The wound should be cleaned every day. The cleanings help to remove crusts, reduce scarring and make it easier for the stitches to be removed or to dissolve. Follow only the instructions checked:

- Skin adhesive strips are in place. Do not get the area wet. Do not clean the wound.
- Do not** disturb or clean the wound until instructed to do so by your doctor.
- Do not** get the wound wet at all.

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Wound and Skin Cleaning, continued

- Do not** place the wound under water (like in the bath or pool). Showers are allowed after _____ days.
- Wash your child's hair today and then not for _____ days.
- Starting 24 hours after the injury, clean the wound _____ times per day for _____ days.
- An antibiotic ointment may be applied _____ times per day with each dressing change.

How to Clean the Wound and Skin

- Clean the wound with a solution of half hydrogen peroxide and half water.
- Use a Q-Tip[®] dipped in the peroxide mixture. Gently clean both sides of the wound. Then clean in between the stitches.
- All the knots will be lined up on one side of the wound. Clean in the direction that keeps the knots off the middle line of the wound.
- Sometimes when you clean a wound, a knot in the stitches may come loose. If 1 or 2 knots come untied, don't worry. Just clean the wound gently. If the wound opens, call your child's doctor or go to the Emergency Department or Urgent Care as soon as possible.

Signs of Infection

Watch for these signs of infection:

- Increasing redness around the wound
- Increasing pain or tenderness
- Yellow or green discharge or drainage from the wound
- Increased swelling
- Foul odor from the wound
- Fever
- Red streaks that start at the wound and travel up toward the body

There is a chance that the wound may get infected. If you think the wound is infected, call your child's doctor or return to the Emergency Department or Urgent Care.

Activity

- Your child's doctor will tell you when he or she can go back to school or child care.
- Your child should avoid contact sports, bike riding, swimming, tree climbing, skating and skateboarding, physical education class and other rough play until the doctor tells you it is ok.

When to Call the Doctor

- Call your child's doctor or return to the Emergency Department or Urgent Care if there are any signs of infection.
- Call your child's doctor to arrange a follow-up appointment if needed.

Other Advice

Many things affect how a wound heals. Your child's overall health, proper cleansing, proper nutrition, direction of the wound, exposure to UV rays and susceptibility to thick scarring can affect the look of your child's healed wound. The final scar may not settle for a few years after the injury. Ask your doctor for the Helping Hand on Scar Management (*HH-IV-132, Scar Management*).

- After the stitches are removed or have dissolved, you may apply lotions to the healed skin. You may use lotions such as aloe vera, shea butter, cocoa butter, vitamin E oil or an over-the-counter scar reducing cream.
- It is important to apply **sunscreen** often to the healed wound for up to 2 years. Use a sunblock lotion with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- For healed wounds on the head, a **hat** should be worn to protect the area from the sun and UV rays.

Wound Care Checklist

Please call the Plastic Surgery Department at 614-722-6299 or your child's doctor if:

The cut/incision opens or starts bleeding.

There is yellow or green puss coming from the cut/incision.

The cut/incision has increasing pain, redness, or swelling.

Your child's temperature is higher than 101° (by mouth or rectum) or 100° axillary (under the arm).

Type of suture

- Regular/nonabsorbable stitches which will need to be removed at follow up visit
- Absorbable stitches that do not need to be removed and fall out on their own
- Stitches under the skin that do not need to be removed
- Staples which will need to be removed at follow up visit
- Glue (Dermabond®) which will dissolve and fall off on its own
- Adhesive strips (Steri-strips®) which will fall off on their own

Type of dressing

- Adaptic®
- Mepitel®
- Gauze
- Wrap/Ace® bandage/Coban®
- Tegaderm®
- Antibiotic ointment
- Cast or splint

Dressing instructions

- Remove dressing in ___ day(s) / week(s)
- Do not remove dressing until seen by doctor/practitioner at post-op visit
- Change dressing ___ time(s) per day
- Change dressing ___ time(s) per week
- Apply ointment ___ time(s) per day
- Leave glue (Dermabond) in place

Pain management

- May take Tylenol® (Acetaminophen) at home every 4-6 hours for pain. Follow directions on bottle for dosage.
- May take Motrin® (Ibuprofen) at home every 4-6 hours for pain. Follow directions on bottle for dosage.

Bathing Instructions/Washing Incision

- Do **NOT** get surgical site/dressing wet prior to follow up visit.
- Do **NOT** get steri strips wet.
- May get steri strips wet, but do **NOT** soak them under water.
- Wash incision ___ days after dressing is removed.
- Sponge bath for ___ days & do **NOT** get dressing/incision wet.
- May bathe/shower but do **NOT** soak incision under water.
- Wash incision ___ times per day with mild soap and water. Pat cut/incision dry and leave open to air
- NO** swimming until ___ week(s) after surgery.
- NO** sports for ___ week(s) after surgery.