

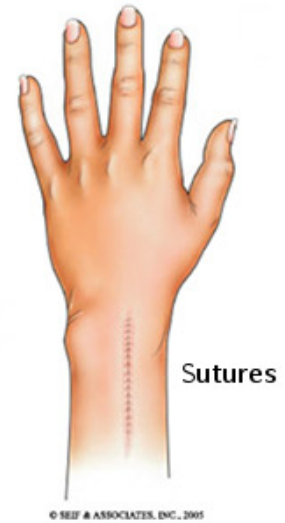
Sutured Wound Care

Sutures are stitches that can be used to close wounds. Taking care of your wound properly can help prevent pain and infection. It can also help your wound to heal more quickly.

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR SUTURED WOUND

Wound Care

- Keep the wound clean and dry.
- If you were given a bandage (*dressing*), change it at least one time per day or as told by your doctor. You should also change it if it gets wet or dirty.
- Keep the wound completely dry for the first 24 hours or as told by your doctor. After that time, you may shower or bathe. However, make sure that the wound is not soaked in water until the sutures have been removed.
- Clean the wound one time each day or as told by your doctor.
 - Wash the wound with soap and water.
 - Rinse the wound with water to remove all soap.
 - Pat the wound dry with a clean towel. **Do not** rub the wound.
- After cleaning the wound, put a thin layer of antibiotic ointment on it as told your doctor. This ointment:
 - Helps to prevent infection.
 - Keeps the bandage from sticking to the wound.
- Have the sutures removed as told by your doctor.



General Instructions

- Take or apply medicines only as told by your doctor.
- To help prevent scarring, make sure to cover your wound with sunscreen whenever you are outside after the sutures are removed and the wound is healed. Make sure to wear a sunscreen of at least 30 SPF.
- If you were prescribed an antibiotic medicine or ointment, finish all of it even if you start to feel better.
- **Do not** scratch or pick at the wound.
- Keep all follow-up visits as told by your doctor. This is important.
- Check your wound every day for signs of infection. Watch for:
 - Redness, swelling, or pain.
 - Fluid, blood, or pus.
- Raise (*elevate*) the injured area above the level of your heart while you are sitting or lying down, if possible.
- Avoid stretching your wound.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your pee (*urine*) clear or pale yellow.

GET HELP IF:

- You were given a tetanus shot and you have any of these where the needle went in:
 - Swelling.
 - Very bad pain.
 - Redness.
 - Bleeding.
- You have a fever.
- A wound that was closed breaks open.
- You notice a bad smell coming from the wound.
- You notice something coming out of the wound, such as wood or glass.
- Medicine does not help your pain.
- You have any of these at the site of the wound.
 - More redness.
 - More swelling.
 - More pain.
- You have any of these coming from the wound.
 - Fluid.
 - Blood.
 - Pus.
- You notice a change in the color of your skin near the wound.
- You need to change the bandage often due to fluid, blood, or pus coming from the wound.
- You have a new rash.
- You have numbness around the wound.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- You have very bad swelling around the wound.
- Your pain suddenly gets worse and is very bad.
- You have painful lumps near the wound or on skin that is anywhere on your body.
- You have a red streak going away from the wound.
- The wound is on your hand or foot and you cannot move a finger or toe like normal.
- The wound is on your hand or foot and you notice that your fingers or toes look pale or bluish.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

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