

Wound Care Instructions for wounds with stitches

Please observe the following guidelines to help your surgical wounds heal quickly and with less scarring:

Cleaning

- Do not remove bandage for the first 72 hours after surgery, and keep the bandage dry. Your bandage will keep your wound clean, moist, and will help prevent bleeding.
- After 72 hours, get in the shower with your bandage on. This will soften the adhesive and make it easier to remove. After your shower, remove the bandage.
- After you remove the bandage, do the vinegar soak.
- **Vinegar Soak:** Mix a tablespoon of white vinegar in a cup of cool water. Rest a gauze soaked in this solution on the wound for 15 minutes. Do not rub or scrub the wound.
- Pat the area dry. Apply a generous film of ointment (Vaseline, Polysporin or Bactroban) and re-bandage the area with a non-stick bandage, not dry gauze.
- Repeat the vinegar soak, ointment and bandage twice every 24 hours until you return for removal of the sutures. Do not leave your wound uncovered for any length of time. Keep wound covered in the shower as the water and soap can be irritating.

Activity

- Please keep movement of the surgical site to a minimum for the first three weeks after surgery.
- **Avoid all strenuous activity for at least a week after surgery. No exercise, no bending over, no heavy lifting, no exercise, no golf, no swimming, no running, etc.**
- Wounds only have approximately 5% of their strength one week after surgery and so care must be taken not to stretch open the surgical site. Avoid stretching or overusing the surgical area for three weeks and then slowly start to increase activity to the affected area.

Bleeding

- Occasionally wounds bleed. Almost all the time, this bleeding can be stopped by applying firm pressure to the area for 15 minutes. No peeking!!! After you have been applying pressure for 15 minutes, using a clock to keep time, slowly let up the pressure and see if the wound is still bleeding.
- Do not remove the bandage that is on if you have a problem with bleeding. Apply an additional bandage over it with firm pressure after the bleeding has stopped, and leave it in place for 48 hours before changing.
- If you have gone through 2 cycles of holding firm pressure for 15 minutes each by a timer and the wound is still bleeding, please call the office. (251)928-3844

Infection

- Even though many efforts are taken to eliminate infections, occasionally wounds do become infected. Some redness around the wound is normal. However, if the skin around the wound becomes increasingly more red, swollen, hot, and painful, or drains pus, you may have an infection. If this occurs, please call the office.

Pain

- Some discomfort and swelling can be encountered during the healing process. Take Tylenol if needed. If severe pain occurs, please call the office. (251)928-3844

Suture Removal

- If your stitches are all dissolving, you do not have to come back to get them removed. Otherwise, you will be given an appointment for suture removal