

Post-Operative Care Frequently Asked Questions

The Wound is red. Is this normal?

The edges of a healing incision may be slightly red. Redness is normal, but call your Doctor if the redness is increasing or if it spreads more than 1cm from the wound. Call your Doctor if you see pus in the wound or if the wound is more than mildly tender or painful.

What do I do if the wound bleeds?

If your dressing becomes bloody, remove the dressing carefully and apply another similar dressing. Apply pressure directly to the wound site for 15 - 20 minutes. Doing this will usually stop the bleeding. If the wound keeps bleeding after you have applied pressure, call the clinic.

It is very important that you tell your Doctor if you are on Anti-coagulants (ie: Blood thinning medications e.g.: Aspirin) as your Doctor may want you to stop taking them before your procedure.

Do I need to keep the wound dry?

Keep your wound clean and dry for the first 3 days. Avoid showering or bathing the first day. Try taking a sponge bath instead. After the 3rd day you may shower as normal. Gently towel dry the wound after washing.

Will the stitches be removed?

Deep stitches are absorbed by your body gradually and don't need to be removed. Your Doctor or Clinic Nurse will remove stitches that don't absorb into the tissues. Stitches are usually removed in 5-14 days after surgery. The length of time the stitches are kept in depends on where they are situated, the type of procedure, type of suture used and how quickly you heal. You're Doctor or Clinic Nurse may apply skin tape after the stitches are removed. Skin tape provides additional wound support. You can shower with this on.

Should I limit my activities?

Yes - Limiting movement of the area around your wound aids in healing. Avoid activities that could cause your wound to pull apart. Your Doctor may ask you to avoid lifting, straining, exercise or sports (in particular contact sports) for the first few weeks after surgery. You must not go swimming while you have stitches in place. Call The Clinic immediately if the wound pulls apart.

Should I avoid sun exposure?

A healing scar will darken and become more noticeable if it gets sunburned. Limit your sun exposure for the first 6 months after surgery. When you go outdoors during the day, cover your scar with tape or sunscreen.

How can I tell if my wound has become infected?

The wound have redness that is hot to touch and more painful than should be expected. Some redness along the suture line is normal in the first couple of days. There will be swelling that is associated with the increased redness and pain. Some swelling is normal in the first couple of days. Pus coming from the wound and a fever, greater than 37.3 and associated with increased pain, swelling and redness.