

Sutures & Wound Care

Pre / Post Care Guide

Please read carefully before and after your appointment. These instructions help your wound heal well and reduce the risk of infection or scarring.

Wound Care After Sutures, Staples, or Dermabond

Cleaning the Wound: Gently clean the wound with tap water or saline once or twice daily. You may shower and let water run over the wound as early as 12–24 hours after closure. Pat the area dry with a clean towel. Avoid scrubbing the wound.

Dressings: If a bandage was applied, keep it clean and dry. Change the dressing daily or as instructed. For wounds closed with Dermabond, a bandage is usually not needed; the glue forms a protective layer that will peel off on its own in about 5–10 days.

Moist Environment: Apply a thin layer of plain petroleum jelly (like Vaseline) to the wound to keep it moist. This helps healing and reduces scarring. White petrolatum is as effective as antibiotic ointment for most wounds.

Activity: Avoid activities that may stretch or put stress on the wound until it has healed. For wounds on the arms or legs, try to limit movement as much as possible for the first few days.

Signs of Infection: Watch for increased redness, swelling, warmth, pus, or pain at the wound site. Fever or red streaks spreading from the wound are also warning signs. If any of these occur, contact your healthcare provider promptly.

Removal of Sutures or Staples: Sutures and staples are usually removed in 5–14 days, depending on the location and type of wound. Your healthcare provider will tell you when to return for removal. Do not try to remove sutures or staples yourself unless specifically instructed and trained to do so.

Dermabond (Skin Glue): Do not pick at or scratch the glue. It will naturally fall off in about 5–10 days. You may bathe and return to normal activities as soon as you feel comfortable, but avoid soaking the wound (no swimming or baths) until the glue has fallen off.

Tetanus Protection: Make sure your tetanus shots are up to date. If you have not had a booster in the last 10 years, or if your wound is dirty and you have not had a booster in the last 5 years, ask your healthcare provider about getting one.

Follow-Up: Attend any scheduled follow-up appointments for wound check or removal of sutures or staples. If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider.

Quick Summary

- Clean the wound gently with tap water or saline.
- Keep the wound moist with petroleum jelly.
- Watch for signs of infection.
- Follow instructions for removal of sutures or staples.
- Let Dermabond fall off naturally.

- Keep tetanus shots up to date.
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Suture Care — Frequently Asked Questions

What are sutures and why are they used?

Sutures are special threads used by doctors to close wounds or surgical cuts. They help hold the skin and tissue together so your body can heal properly and reduce scarring.

How should I care for my sutures at home?

Keep the area clean and covered with a bandage as directed. You can gently clean around the sutures with soap and water.

- **You may get the wound wet** after the first 12–48 hours, unless your doctor says otherwise. Pat dry after washing.
- **Apply petroleum jelly (like Vaseline)** if recommended, to keep the area moist and help healing.
- **Do not use alcohol or hydrogen peroxide** on the wound, as these can slow healing.
- **Change the dressing as instructed**, usually daily or if it gets wet or dirty.

What activities should I avoid while I have sutures?

- Avoid strenuous exercise, heavy lifting, or activities that stretch or put pressure on the area until your doctor says it's safe.
- Don't swim or soak the wound (like in a bathtub) until the sutures are removed and the wound is healed.
- Protect the area from bumps or injury.

How do I know if my sutures are healing properly?

Normal healing signs: Mild redness, swelling, and tenderness for a few days. The wound should gradually look better, not worse. No drainage, or only a small amount of clear fluid, is normal.

What are signs of infection or problems I should watch for?

Watch for:

- Increasing redness, swelling, or pain
- Warmth around the wound
- Yellow or green pus or drainage
- Fever, chills, or severe pain
- Red streaks spreading from the wound
- Wound opening up or bleeding that won't stop

If you notice any of these, contact our office immediately at 801-335-5243.

How and when will my sutures be removed?

Sutures are usually removed by gently cutting the thread near the knot and smoothly sliding it out of the skin, which feels like a quick tug but is typically not painful. They are usually removed by a healthcare provider in 5–14 days, depending on the location and type of wound:

- Face: 5–7 days
- Scalp: 7–10 days
- Trunk / extremities: 10–14 days

- Joints: 14 days

Do not try to remove sutures yourself. Your provider will tell you when to come back for removal and check that the wound is healing well.

Remember

Taking care of your sutures helps prevent infection and ensures the best possible healing. If you have any concerns, reach out to your healthcare team. Be sure to ask about additional regenerative medicine innovations to help you recover faster and decrease the risk of scarring — we recommend PDGF placed topically once the wound has been closed.