

Care of Wound with Stitches

- Following these directions will speed up the healing process and help prevent infection. About 1 in 100 wounds will become infected no matter what you or the doctor does.
- Leave the bandage on for 24 hours (remove the day after surgery).
- **Always wash hands with warm soapy water for one minute before caring for your wound.** Until the stitches are removed wash the wound 2 times a day with soap. If the wound develops a crust then wash the wound 2 times daily with hydrogen peroxide 3%. Bubbling will occur when the hydrogen peroxide contacts the wound. After washing, apply **Vaseline (petroleum jelly)** to the wound and cover with a Band-Aid. Vaseline is available at your drug store.
- There is no problem taking a shower. You do want to wait 24 hours before getting the surgical site wet.
- If your wound is on the scalp, it is not necessary to cover it with a bandage. Simply clean the wound as instructed above and apply Vaseline. Shampooing the scalp is not a problem, but be gentle to the wound site.
- Studies show that wounds covered with a dressing heal faster than uncovered wounds. It is an old wives tale that uncovered wounds heal faster.
- Discomfort, swelling and bruising occurs between 6-20 hours after surgery. If painful, take Tylenol. Also if the pain is persistent, contact the office as soon as possible. **Please start back on your blood thinners the night of surgery, unless you are having wound closure with ENT in Cookeville. You would need to ask them when you can start back on your blood thinners.**
- Removing stitches is virtually painless and is done 7-14 days after surgery, depending on the location and type of surgery which was performed.

Care of Wound with Stitches

Precautions:

- If the skin around the wound becomes red, swollen and painful, you may have an infected wound. Call and make an appointment immediately.
- **It is normal for the wound to drain small amounts of clear or red fluid.** If the wound drains yellow-green fluid or pus call us immediately. Failure to call about an infected wound can have serious consequences.
- If the wound starts to bleed, hold gauze or cotton over the area and apply pressure for 20-30 minutes. If the wound continues to bleed, contact the office.
- It is recommended not to swim in chlorinated or other water no matter where the wound site is.
- Wounds on the face usually heal in one to two weeks. Wounds on the arms, trunk and upper legs heal in about three weeks. Wounds on the lower legs, especially in people over forty, can take up to 3 months to heal. If you are not certain if your wound is healing, please call us.

**Cumberland
Dermatology**

Courtesy of **KENDALL ANNE MORRISON, M.D.**
Justin Bell, FNP-C / Brooke Huff, PA-C / Jessica Rotolo, PA-C
Cumberland Dermatology, P.C.

29 Taylor Avenue, Suite 101, Crossville, TN 38555

303 N Oak Ave, Cookeville, TN 38501

P: (931) 484-6061 / F: (931) 484-6062

www.cumberlanddermatology.com

cderm@cumberlandderm.com / cdermCKVL@cumberlandderm.com