

PRACTICE NURSE INFORMATION – Thank you for your help

This patient has stitches in place that require removal on:

PATIENT INFORMATION

► **Please make an appointment with your practice nurse to have your stitches removed on the above date**

GENERAL WOUND ADVICE**• WOUND CARE**

It is important to rest for 48 hours following skin surgery to minimise complications. Avoid activities like shopping, cycling, and dog walking. You should try and leave the dressing in place until suture removal unless instructed otherwise. The dressing is shower proof and leaving it in place will generally improve wound healing. Should you need to remove the dressing, clean the area with warm water and cotton ear buds. Remove any crusts and apply Vaseline to keep the skin moist. This may be repeated once or twice daily to help produce the best cosmetic result.

• PAIN

Take Paracetamol if your wound is painful. If this fails to ease the pain, try taking some Ibuprofen. If at all possible avoid Aspirin as this can increase the risk of bleeding.

• BLEEDING

It is normal to expect some oozing of blood from the wound. *If bleeding occurs, apply constant pressure for 15 minutes.* It should eventually stop. It is also extremely important that you rest as this will help to keep your blood pressure down and reduce the risk of bruising.

• INFECTION

Infection can complicate any operation and usually appears 2-7 days after the procedure. You may notice increasing pain, redness and swelling. Occasionally, yellow pus may discharge from the wound edge. If infection occurs, see your GP for a prescription for some antibiotics.

• INTERNAL STITCHES

Internal stitches may be used to hold the skin edges together. They usually dissolve in the first few weeks following surgery but can occasionally cause a small blood blister or a non-healing area of the wound. Your practice nurse can normally remove the stitch by exploring the wound edge and snip out the internal stitch.

AFTER SUTURE REMOVAL

Wound strength takes 4-6 weeks to develop and up to 12 months to fully heal. It is important to avoid strenuous exercise for 6 weeks after your operation to make sure that the wound does not break open and to improve the final scar. This is extremely important for wounds on the legs, arms and upper back/chest. You may wish to apply Micropore tape for 4 weeks to support the wound. It may also be helpful to massage the wound for several minutes once daily after stitch removal. Use a moisturiser such as E45 or Vaseline Intensive Care Lotion.