**Suture Wound Advice **

**Mr/Dr/Nurse:**

**Health Care Assistants:**

**Date:**

**This patient has stitches in place:**

Removable stitches

* Please make an appointment to have your stitches removed on this date:

Dissolving stitches

**PATIENT INFORMATION**

Keep dressing dry, remove in days then apply Vaseline to area daily.

**GENERAL WOUND ADVICE**

* **WOUND CARE**

It is important to rest for 48 hours following skin surgery to minimize complications and to do light duties for 2 weeks. Avoid activities like shopping, cycling and dog walking. When you remove dressing (including any butterfly tape) clean the area with warm water and cotton ear buds. Remove any crusts and apply Vaseline to keep the skin moist. This should 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 possible, avoid aspirin as this can increase the risk of bleeding.

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* **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 bleeding.

* **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 nonhealing 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 8 weeks to support the wound. It is also helpful to massage the wound for several minutes daily after stitch removal with Vaseline.

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