**PATIENT INFORMATION**

**EITHER** 1. Please make an appointment with your practice nurse at your surgery to have your stitches

 removed in @ days following your procedure done on / /

**OR**  2. Sutures are absorbable – no need for removal, usually absorb or fall off within 2-4 weeks

**WOUND CARE ADVICE**

**Activity**

It is advisable to limit activities following skin surgery in order to minimise complications for several days or longer if your surgeon advises so

This is particularly important with larger wounds and wounds in areas that are prone to stretching or movement eg the back and limbs – activity may lead to the stitches pulling out and the wound re-opening as well as increasing the chances of infection – these will lead to delayed healing and more scarring

Activities that raise your heart rate and blood pressure will also increase the chances of bleeding

**Dressings**

Wounds heal best if they are kept clean and dry especially in the first 48hrs

You may have a shower proof dressing – this will usually withstand a brief/gentle shower but not a soak in the bath or prolonged showering

Remove the dressing in 24/48 hrs or longer if advised by your surgeon

The use of a thin smear of Vaseline (clean from a new pot that will be free of bugs) over the wound/stitches will help healing and make stitch removal easier

If the wound is at a site where clothing may rub on the stitches or be uncomfortable you may wish to apply a light dressing or tape to the area afterwards – breathable dressings are best

**Pain**

The numbness from the local anaesthetic will wear off after 1-3 hrs

Wounds are usually only slightly uncomfortable afterwards. If necessary take some paracetamol. Ibuprofen is usually ok but try to avoid aspirin as it may increase bleeding

Significant pain more than a day or so after your procedure is unusual and may indicate infection

**PTO**

**Bleeding**

Some oozing of blood or staining of dressings is normal afterwards. If the dressing is very bloody remove it and redress it.

If there is significant bleeding apply firm pressure with a clean pad or tissue and it should stop. Raising the affected area will help the bleeding stop more quickly

**Infection**

Infection is uncommon but can happen with any wound and usually occurs 2-7 days after surgery.

You may notice redness, swelling and pain and sometimes discharge, muckiness and odour.

If you think you may have an infected wound please see your GP to see if antibiotics are required

**Internal stitches**

Wounds often have a layer of internal (absorbable or dissolving) stitches as well as the ones that need removing. You may also only have internal or only external stitches – your nurse/surgeon will advise you.

Absorbable stitches may take months to fully disintegrate and may occasionally produce small red bumps under/in a healing wound that may leak some fluid and may have a bit of thread sticking out. This usually settles on it’s own with time but can be confused with infection sometimes so seek advice if in doubt.

**Healing**

Wound strength may take several weeks to develop so it is important to limit strenuous activity especially with larger wounds. You may wish to apply tape eg Micropore to the wound to support it.

Sometimes there may be an indentation or lumpiness at the ends of a wound for a few months but this usually settles with time as the skin redistributes itself. Gentle massage of wounds with a moisturiser may help them settle down.