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**Wound Care following Surgery or Treatment at A&E**

Your wound may have been dressed for protection or to stop any further bleeding. We ask that you keep it clean and dry as this will encourage healing and help prevent infection.

To assist the healing process, we recommend that you:

* Rest the injury as much as possible.
* Do not put any strain or stretch on the wound.
* Keep the affected area elevated, to keep pain and swelling to a minimum. Your arm may have been placed in a sling or you can rest it on the opposite shoulder; feet can be kept up on a stool.

**If you notice any unusual swelling, pain, redness or heat around your wound, please contact the surgery or the department at the hospital where you had the procedure performed.**

* If you have had Steri-strips (paper stitches/butterfly stitches) applied, these should be kept on for seven days, after which you should soak the wound and remove whilst wet. In the meantime try to keep the Steri-strips dry. Cover with a simple sterile dressing if they are likely to get dirty.
* If there is any evidence that the wound is reopening, please contact the surgery or hospital Department who performed the procedure.
* If you had ‘tissue adhesive’ applied; this will break down naturally over the next 5 - 7 days. If you have any concerns about your wound, please contact the surgery.
* If you have clips or staples please follow the advice given on discharge from the hospital and make an appointment for removal by The Nursing Team as soon as you are discharged for the date advised.
* If you have sutures (stitches) that require removal, please follow the advice given by the hospital/clinic, make an appointment with the Nursing Team as soon as possible for the removal date advised. It is advisable to keep these sutures dry unless advised otherwise. Keep covered with a simple sterile dressing if in an area which could get dirty.
* If you have dissolvable sutures (stitches) follow the advice given by the hospital or clinic you attended. It is advisable to keep them covered with a simple sterile dressing if they are in an area where they may get dirty.

Simple dressings can be purchased from any Pharmacy. *See How to change/apply a simple dressing after a minor skin tear, cut or abrasion* form for further advice on how to change a dressing.

If you have been advised to have the dressing checked by the Nursing Team at the surgery, this may be to check for signs of infection, signs of healing or deterioration or for a reduction of any padding applied. If we are unable to see you on the day advised by the hospital due to these very busy times please accept our apology and make an appointment for as soon as possible.

You can follow *How to change/apply a simple dressing after a minor skin tear, cut or abrasion* form for advice how to carry out simple dressing changes and Signs of Infection. It is advisable not to clean the wound unless completely necessary.