

# **PATIENT INFORMATION**

## **Wound Care**

**Accident & Emergency Department**



This leaflet advises you how you should care for your wound.

Wounds heal by;

**First Closure** (primary closure) - the wound edges are brought together by paper stitches, glue , stiches or staples.. Most wounds in the Emergency Department are treated this way.

**Delayed Closure** - the wound may be closed 3 or more days after with sutures or staples. This may be used if a wound is 24 hours old or is contaminated.

**Second Closure** (secondary closure) – some wounds are left to heal by themselves - for example some trauma or burns, wounds older than 12-24 hours or wounds not suitable for First Closure.

The aim of wound closure is to prevent infection, to help skin repair, and minimise scar formation

### **Paper stitches - Steristrips**

These are sticky strips. You can remove them yourself in 5-7 days. You can moisten the steristrips with warm water to remove them, this makes it easier.

Your wound may need to be reviewed in a local clinic. Your doctor/nurse will advise you.

## **Glue**

Medical glue does not need to be removed. It will form a scab that will fall off in approximately 10 days when the wound is healed.

## **Sutures - stitches**

Your doctor/nurse will tell you when your stitches need to be removed. Please do not remove the stitches yourself.

Please arrange with a local clinic for removal of sutures in \_\_\_\_\_ days.

Number of sutures \_\_\_\_\_ Size \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_

## **Staples**

Your doctor/nurse will tell you when your staples need to be removed. Please do not remove the staples by yourself.

Please arrange for removal of staples in \_\_\_\_\_ days.

Number of staples\_\_\_\_\_

## **Wound Care**

Most wounds need to be kept clean and dry and covered with a dressing for 5-7 days.

If your wound has paper stitches, glue or sutures it must be kept clean and dry. Avoid showering/bathing the wound area for 5 days; this is to help the wound heal.

Your doctor/ nurse can advise you about showering/bathing and dressing changes.

Waterproof coverings over your dressing need removing after your bath or shower.

## **Risk of Infection**

Most wounds heal without the need for antibiotics.

Wounds caused by animals have a high risk of infection and antibiotics are needed.

Wounds sustained in very dirty environments such as sewers and drains may need antibiotics also.

Some people are more at risk from wound infection:

If you smoke

Have diabetes

Medical conditions that lower the immune system

Other conditions that affect the skin

## **Concerns**

If your wound is hot or develops:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Increased pain
- Discharge

or if you feel unwell, this may be an infection. Please seek advice.

Also seek advice regarding dressing concerns/other concerns from:

Emergency Department  
NHS 111  
Local Walk in Clinic

## **General Advice**

You may need some pain relief such as paracetamol.

Rest/elevation of the wound may help.

Most wounds will heal within 2-3 weeks, some take longer.

Always protect your new scar with factor 50 sunblock on sunny days.



**Please call 01704 704714 if you need  
this leaflet in an alternative format**

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**FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Telephone (01695) 656680  
Email [soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net](mailto:soh-tr.appointments@nhs.net)

Please remember to complete the **attached Friends and Family Test**.

Alternatively, you can complete the *Friends and Family Test* on-line by going to:  
[southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/FFT](http://southportandormskirk.nhs.uk/FFT)  
**Thank you**

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