

Wound Care Advice

Your wound may have been closed with:

Sutures (Stitches):

These are usually used to close cuts that are large or for wounds that are particularly deep, or for wounds over areas that need to bend like knees. A sterile surgical thread is used for the stitches.

Skin-closure strips (“butterfly stitches”):

These may be used in addition to or as an alternative to tissue adhesive; the strips are sticky and can be placed over the edges of the cut to hold them together, and encourage the skin to heal.

Skin Glue:

Skin glue is a special medical glue used to close wounds. It can be used on its own or with stitches or adhesive tape. It is painted onto your skin over your cut while the edges are held together and forms a protective waterproof covering over your wound. It is usually used for cuts or wounds that are small or minor with straight edges that can be easily pulled together.

These are usually found on the face or head; some parts of the arms and legs or the trunk of the body (torso). Skin glue is not suitable for wounds over joints, like your knees or fingers.

The method used depends on the type of wound and you will have been assessed by a Nurse Practitioner, an experienced nurse, or doctor.

Skin Closure Strips	Skin Glue
These are usually removed in 5-7 days	This does not need to be removed. It will fall off once the wound is healed – between 5-14 days.
<p>You will probably be asked to remove them at home once your wound is healed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To do this, moisten the wound and the strips with water before carefully removing them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid touching the glue for 24 hours Wounds can be lightly washed but not scrubbed after the glue has set. Showers are preferable to baths to avoid soaking the wound If it gets wet pat the area dry– do not rub it Do not allow the wound area to be wet for a long time (such as having a bath or swimming) – this could make the glue come off, or reopen the wound If the wound is on your head, just shower your hair lightly – do not use hair products Do not pick at the glued area
<p>Any scab that forms over a wound is part of healing and must be left on until it falls off naturally. Please resist the temptation to pick it off!</p>	

What are the signs of infection? What do I do?

Your wound may ooze slightly at first — this is natural. However if:

- the wound becomes more red or swollen
- the pain or soreness in your wound gets worse
- pus or blood leaks from your wound
- you have a temperature of 38°C or over and/or the shivers and shakes

Then you should see your GP as this may indicate an infection is developing.

Advice for Wound Care

Should I keep the wound covered?	<p>This depends on the location of the wound. Usually we do not put dressings over wounds on the face or head</p> <p>Try not to disturb your dressing, but if the top layer becomes dirty or loose, you will need to replace it – your practice nurse can do this. Keep your dressing on for at least 5 days - unless you have been told otherwise.</p>
Can I get my wound wet?	<p>You should try to keep the area clean and dry. The skin will not heal properly if it keeps getting wet. Wash around it where possible</p>
Can I go to work?	<p>That depends on what your job is and where the wound is. If your work means you cannot keep it clean and dry, then it is better to stay off work until the wound has healed.</p> <p>Do not keep the wound covered with waterproof finger-stalls/plastic bags etc., as this will slow down healing and make the wound soggy and more prone to infection.</p>
What if the wound re-opens?	<p>Occasionally, wounds can re-open during the early stages of healing. If this happens return to the department where you were treated as soon as you can – see below for contact telephone numbers.</p>
Will I have a scar?	<p>This will depend on the size and position of the wound. Healed cuts are always red and obvious at first but generally fade with time. You will probably be left with a mark but this is impossible to predict.</p> <p>Scars can take 6 months to fade, but it can be longer.</p> <p>If you can keep your wound clean, dry and untouched, then there will be less chance of infection occurring and less chance of an obvious scar.</p> <p>In some cases, as the wound heals, the colour in the skin darkens around the scar. You may prevent this if you use high-factor sunscreen regularly for 6-12 months on healing wounds that are exposed to sunshine.</p>

Advice for Wound Care (cont...d)

Anything else I can do to help my wound heal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Avoid wearing tight clothing that could rub against your wound.○ Do not stick a plaster on top of the skin glue – it could pull the glue off. If we think your wound needs a dressing, we will have put one on and tell you when to remove it.○ Do not put creams or lotions on your wound – these could make the skin glue or closure strips come off too soon.○ Do not brush your hair around the wound area.
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You might have had a swab of your wound done prior to being commenced on antibiotics. If the wound does not start to improve within 48 hours of taking antibiotics, you will need follow up at your GP practice. Your GP could check on the wound swab result to confirm that you are on the correct antibiotics. This is because at times the wound swab result might indicate you will need a different antibiotic to the one you currently are on. This could be appropriately changed at your GP practice.

If you are concerned about your progress, or if you have not improved within 10 days, we advise you to contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department/MIU department where you were seen.

If you are at all concerned about your injury please contact the relevant Emergency Department/Minor Injury Unit (MIU):

Royal Gwent Hospital (RGH): 01633 234056

Nevill Hall Hospital (NHH): 01873 732073

Grange University Hospital (GUH): 01633 493287

Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr (YYF): 01443 802353

Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan (YAB) MIU: 01495 363318

References:

<https://cks.nice.org.uk/lacerations#!management>

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/accidents-first-aid-and-treatments/how-do-i-care-for-a-wound-treated-with-skin-glue/>

**“This document is available in Welsh /
Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”.**