

Wound Care

To help prevent infection, bleeding, and lessen the risk of poor healing, please follow below:

The First 24 Hours

Leave the bandage in place. Keep the area dry. If the dressing falls off early, replace it with a band-aid or with a non-stick pad and tape.

After 24 Hours

You may bathe or shower at this time.

Cleanse the site once a day as listed below, remove your bandage to do so.

- Wash hands with soap and water, dry with a clean towel.
- Remove the dressing.
- Cleanse the site once a day with mild soapy water or naturally in the shower, then pat it dry with a clean piece of gauze or a cotton-tip applicator (Q-Tip).
- Following this, apply a thin film of Vaseline or Aquaphor using a cotton-tip applicator.
- apply a new bandage to the site.

In the first few days, you should try to keep the wound moist as this will speed healing and limit poor scarring. Keep it covered (12 hours on/12 hours off). Do not allow the site to become dry or crusted or attempt to dry it out with rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide.

Continue this regimen until the area is pink and healed. Depending on the size, location, and type of wound and your own body's ability to heal, this may take 4 to 6 weeks to heal. It may take longer if the wound is located on the lower body or the legs.

If you experience discomfort, you can take acetaminophen(Tylenol) or Ibuprofen for pain.

If sutures were placed, they should be removed in **10-14 for the body, 5-7 days for the head and neck.** We would be happy to remove the sutures in our office. This can also be performed by your local medical provider or by you or your family members if desired.

Once the sutures are removed, if there are no open areas, scabs, or bleeding, no further wound care is needed. If you see small sores or open areas of skin, continue the wound care (as outlined above) until the skin is pink and healed over (no scabs).

Signs of an Infection

A small amount of bleeding or oozing is normal. Local signs of infection include a large area of surrounding redness, pustular drainage, swelling, or worsening pain that is not controlled by over-the-counter pain medication. Please draw a line with a pen around the red area and call our office.

If you have questions about your wound site, or have not received pathology results within 2 weeks, please call us at (512) 533-9900.