



Wound care

This leaflet gives advice on wound care after leaving the Emergency Department.

Good wound care

Good wound care will help to reduce pain, prevent infection and minimize scarring. Puncture wounds and deep cuts are more likely to become infected than scrapes and abrasions. General wound care includes thorough cleaning, appropriate closure, dressings, resting and elevation of the injured area until pain and swelling are better.

Healing/scarring

Scarring will occur to wounds that are more than superficial - and it may remain red for 6 months or more. You can help the healing process by massaging the wound, protecting from sunlight and further injury.

What to look out for

- Increased redness or swelling around the wound.
- Pus-like discharge from the wound.
- Increasing pain or an inability to move fingers or toes if the wound was over tendons.
- If the wounds are caused by animal bites there is a high risk of infection from all the bacteria that are carried on teeth. Usually, these wounds will be cleaned and left open to heal

If you develop any of the symptoms above return to the Emergency Department OR your General Practitioner

Tissue adhesive (“glue”)

Your wound may have been closed with “medical glue” which holds the wound edges together for 5-10 days and then falls off naturally. Do not pick or scratch at the glued area, as this may cause the wound to open up. Keep the area clean and dry for 5 days. A scab will form but this will come off within 10-21 days. The appearance after healing is similar to the results seen after suturing.

Steristrips (butterfly stitches)

These are strips of sticky paper or plastic that hold the wound edges together to allow healing. They should be left on for 5-7 days. Keep the area clean and dry otherwise they may peel off before the wound is healed.

They will usually peel away by themselves, if not, to remove them, moisten for 10 minutes and carefully peel off. This can also be done by your practice nurse if you wish.

Sutures (stitches)

The local anaesthetic used will wear off over the next hour and you may experience mild to moderate pain. It is important to keep the wound clean and dry until the sutures are removed. Avoid using cosmetics, hair products or lotions over the area until the sutures are removed. The doctor, emergency nurse practitioner or nurse will advise you when the sutures should be removed. After the wound has begun to heal you may leave it open to the air, you may wear a dry dressing for protection.

Sutures should be removed by your practice nurse - you need to make the necessary appointment for this.

To the GP/ Practice Nurse

Please removesutures in days

Thank you

Calderdale and Huddersfield Emergency Department

Tell us your views

If you wish to discuss any aspect of your treatment and care, please speak to a senior member of staff or to the nurse looking after you. The matrons are also available during normal working hours and they welcome your views.

Friends and Family Test

Whatever your experience you can give feedback by answering the Friends & Family test question – How likely are you to recommend our A&E Department to family and friends if they needed similar care or treatment?

This can be completed online at <http://surveys.this.nhs.uk> using tag name **chftae** or by completing the form available within the department.