

# How to care for a wound closed with skin glue and/or steri-strips after an injury

Emergency Department

Information for Patients

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## Introduction

Skin glue is a special medical glue often used to close small or minor wounds. It can be used on its own or with adhesive tape (steri-strips). The glue brings the edges of a wound together, stops bleeding and puts a protective waterproof cover over it.

## What advice do I need to follow if I have steri-strips on my wound?

These are narrow adhesive strips, sometimes called butterfly stitches.

These need to be kept clean and dry.

They can be removed in 7 to 10 days, sometimes up to 14 days for wounds on the shin.

Removing the strips is easy. Dampen the strips and peel them off one at a time.

## What advice do I need to follow if I have skin glue on my wound?

Avoid touching the glue for 24 hours

Medical glue will drop off by itself when the wound is healed roughly within 10 days.

Keep the wound clean and dry for at least the first 5 days, after this you can wash the area normally, but do not soak it.

Pat the wound dry, do not rub it. Do not put plasters or lotions on the wound it may remove the glue.

Do not scratch or pick the wound. The scab /glue will come off when it's healed!

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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## What can I do to help healing and prevent scarring?

- Keep the area clean and dry.
- Do not scratch the wound.
- Try to keep the wound as dry as possible when washing and totally dry for the first 5 days.
- Avoid tight clothing over the wound that may rub.
- Do not apply creams lotions, makeup, soaps, gels or powders to the wound unless you have been told to by your Nurse/Practitioner.
- It may take up to 6months for the redness of a scar to fade.
- You can help the healing process by protecting the scar from sun damage by using sun screen after the wound is healed.
- Applying moisturiser such as E45 after the wound is healed may help to soften scar tissue and will help to minimise the size of a scar.
- There is evidence that eating lots of fresh fruit and vegetables can help with wound healing and help your immune system fight infection.

## What do I need to look out for?

Any type of wound can become infected. Signs of infection include:

- Increased redness and or swelling around the wound.
- Pus like discharge coming from the wound.
- Heat around the wound.
- Increased pain or tenderness.
- Fever: feeling hot, cold, shivering.

Please contact your GP or practice nurse if you develop any of these symptoms. Wound infections can be treated successfully if we catch them early.

## Contact details

Minor Injuries Unit, Emergency Department, Leicester Royal Infirmary Switchboard 0300 303 1573, extension 0052 or 0054.

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