

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

These are adhesive strips, sometimes called butterfly stitches.

These need to be kept clean and dry. They may peel off if they get wet.

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 gently peel them off 1 at a time.

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

Avoid touching the glue for 24 hours. Avoid tight clothing over the wound that may rub.

The glue will drop off by itself when the wound is healed. This will be within about 10 days.

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

Pat the wound dry with a clean towel. Do not rub it or put plasters or lotions on the wound. This may make the glue fall off.

Do not scratch or pick at the wound. The scab /glue will fall 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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To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

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

It may take up to 6 months 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 non fragranced moisturiser such as E45 after the wound is healed. This may help soften scar tissue and will help to reduce the size of a scar.
- Eating a well balanced diet can help with healing. The Eatwell Guide on the NHS website can be viewed here: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide)

## What do I need to look out for?

Wounds will have slight swelling, redness and discomfort as they heal. This is normal. If you get any of the symptoms listed below this may mean you have an infection.

Signs of infection include:

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

Please contact your GP or practice nurse if you get any of these symptoms as wound infections can be treated successfully if treated early.

## Contact details

Minor Injuries Unit, Emergency Department, Leicester Royal Infirmary

0116 258 5727

Switchboard 0300 303 1573.

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