

# Wound care advice after your elective orthopaedic surgery

Department of Orthopaedics

Information for Patients

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This leaflet tells you how to look after your wound, change the dressing and what to look out for after your surgery.

- 1) You must keep your wound clean and dry for 10 to 14 days. During this time you do not need to routinely change your dressing. If your dressing begins to peel off then remove the old dressing and reapply a new one. Make sure you do not touch the wound or the inside of the dressing. Make sure your hands are clean before you start.
- 2) If you have blue stitches or clips these will need to be removed at your GP practice after 10 to 14 days.
- 3) If they are white dissolvable stitches these will fall out over the next 4 weeks. Your GP or practice nurse will need to review your wound and trim any stitches after 10 to 14 days.
- 4) If your wound was glued you do not need to do anything with this. The glue will dissolve. You may still need to visit your practice nurse for a wound review.

You will need to see your GP or practice nurse on the date below. They will check your wound and take out your stitches or clips.

Date: .....

**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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## Wound infections

Keep an eye on your wound for signs of infection. Most wounds heal quickly without problems.

Infections do not happen often. It can happen if bacteria gets into the wound. This risk is more likely 2 to 3 days after surgery, until the wound has healed. Sometimes you can get an infection months later but this is rare.

An infected wound may:

- look red,
- look swollen,
- feel hot,
- start to leak,

If you are worried that your wound is infected, you must contact the ward you were discharged from for advice. The ward will speak with your consultant and make an appointment for your wound to be seen.

## Taking care of your wound at home

- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- Try to move around as much as you can. Do the exercises your physiotherapist has shown you.
- You may have been given anticoagulants to reduce the risk of blood clots after surgery. You must take them as prescribed by the doctor.
- Take your pain relief regularly when you get home as instructed by the discharging nurse. If your pain gets worse or is not responding to pain relief, please get medical advice.
- Keep your dressing dry until your wound is checked and your stitches or clips are removed. **Do not have a bath or shower** during this time unless your nurse says it is okay. It is advised that you have a strip wash at a basin.
- If you have been given wound care advice specific to your surgery then make sure you follow this. This will normally be the case if you have had hand or wrist surgery and are being followed up by the specialist nurse team.
- You can contact us to report any concerns up until your go for your follow up appointment with the surgeon. Your medical/ nursing team will be able to support or direct you to the right medical care. After this time, please call your GP.

## Follow-up appointment

You will have a follow up appointment with your medical team. This is often between 6 to 8 weeks after your discharge. We will send this date in the post. If you have not had an appointment after 4 weeks call the ward you were discharged from.



## When to get medical help

If your wound:

- becomes red,
- feels more painful,
- starts leaking fluid or bleeding,
- or if you are worried it may be infected,

Please call the ward you were discharged from.

If you have any **severe chest pain and severe difficulty** breathing you should **call 999** or go to the Emergency Department right away.

If you have **pain and tenderness** to your calf **call 111** for advice and tell the call handler you have had surgery.

## Contact details:

If you have any problems please contact the ward you were discharged from:

- Ward 18: **0116 258 4147**
- Ward 11: **0116 258 8335**
- Ward 14: **0116 258 4112**

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔  
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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