

Caring for Your Child's Wound and Stitches

Your child has had an injury which has caused a break in the skin. The wound has been cleaned and treated to help it heal.



How do wounds heal?

A wound heals in 3 stages:

1. **Stage 1** – In the first 4 to 6 days the wound appears red and swollen. This is because the blood supply to the area is increased to bring substances to the wound which are needed for healing.
2. **Stage 2** – In this stage the tissue begins to re-build. This begins about the 3rd or 4th day and lasts for about 2 to 3 weeks. At this stage the wound is strengthened and is not likely to open. It may appear as a purplish, irregular, raised scar.
3. **Stage 3** – This stage can take months or even years. The scar gets whiter and changes in shape and size.

How do I care for my child's stitches and/or wound?

The care of stitches and/or a wound depends on the type, extent, location and how the wound was treated. The care for your child's wound is as follows:

- Your child's wound requires **no stitches or bandage**. Keep it clean and dry.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment such as _____ to the wound 3 to 4 times a day for _____ days.
- Your child's wound has **steri-strips** on it to hold the edges together. Keep it clean and dry until the steri-strips fall off on their own.
- Your child's wound was closed with a special "glue". Keep it clean and dry.
- Your child's wound has **dissolvable stitches**. Keep it clean and dry for the next _____ days.
- Your child's wound has a **bandage** on it. Keep it clean and dry. If it gets soiled or wet, change it. To change the bandage:
 1. Remove soiled/wet bandage.
 2. Clean your hands.
 3. Clean the wound with a clean washcloth and clean soapy water. Avoid rubbing the wound. Gently pat it dry with a clean towel.
 4. Clean your hands again.
 5. Apply an antibiotic ointment if recommended.
 6. Cover the wound with a clean bandage.
 7. Keep the bandage clean and dry.
- Your child's wound has **stitches/staples** that need to be removed. Your child's stitches/staples should come out on:

To have the stitches/staples removed:
 Come to Children's Emergency/Children's Clinic at:
_____ on

- Make an appointment with your child's doctor to have the stitches/staples removed.

It is important that you keep your appointment to have the wound checked and the stitches/staples removed.



What else should I do to take care of my child's stitches/staples and/or wound?

What if I have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, call:

- Your child's doctor.
- Health Links – Info Santé at **788-8200** (toll free 1-888-315-9257)

How do I know if the wound is getting infected?

Signs that your child's wound may be getting infected are:

- Fever
- Increased redness
- Increased pain
- Drainage
- Swelling at the site

See your doctor if any of these signs occur.

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