

Instructions for Incision Care: Non-Dissolvable Stitches

Oozing or bleeding is expected for a couple of days after your procedure. If this happens, raise the area of the incision above the level of your heart, if possible. Then, apply gentle pressure for 10 to 15 minutes. If the incision is on your face or scalp, you may want to put an old towel or pillowcase on your pillow the first night in case there is any oozing.

After your procedure, your care team covered your incision with a bandage. Please leave it on until the day after your procedure. Then, remove it gently.

When you remove your bandage, you will notice some dried blood and/or scabbing around your incision. You may gently clean the area with a cotton swab dipped in 3% hydrogen peroxide, or with warm water and mild soap.

You may shower and let soap and water *gently* run over the incision beginning the day after your procedure. Lightly blot the incision site dry. Avoid letting water from the shower head fall directly on your incision. Do not put your incision completely under water or soak your incision for 2 weeks following your procedure.

Once the site is clean and dry, apply over-the-counter bacitracin ointment (antibiotic ointment) to your stitches. This ointment will help prevent an infection.

Put antibiotic ointment on your stitches 2 to 3 times every day for 3 days after your procedure. After the 3rd day, please switch to over-the-counter Aquaphor® ointment. It is gentler on skin.

You can cover your incision with a bandage or gauze/ tape. If you have put ointment on your incision, you do not **have** to cover it.

Bruising and swelling is normal. The most bruising and swelling will be 72 hours after your procedure. The area will look its worst 3 to 4 days after your procedure. Then, it will slowly start to look better. To minimize swelling and bruising, keep the incision site elevated as much as possible for the first 3 days after your procedure.

Please *do not* put ice on your incision.

You may use over-the-counter medications for pain or discomfort. These may be acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or pain medication prescribed by your physician, as needed.

Please **do not use** anti-inflammatory medications such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or naproxen (Aleve®) for 48 hours after your procedure.

Your stitches are on top of your skin and need to be removed. Unless your physician tells you otherwise, please schedule a visit for 5 to 7 days after your procedure. A nurse will remove your stitches at this visit.

Please call our office at 847.854.3522 (TTY: 711), if you notice any of these symptoms:

A temperature more than 101 degrees F for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart

A big increase in redness, swelling or pain around the incision

A **large amount** of bleeding or drainage from your incision
