



## Sutured or Stapled Wound Care

Sutures are stitches that can be used to close wounds. Wound care helps prevent pain and infection.

### HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Your stitches/staples should be removed in \_\_\_\_\_ days by your healthcare provider. If you have been given a staple remover, make sure you take this with you to your healthcare provider for staple removal.
- Keep the area of your wound and any dressing applied to it clean and dry for \_\_\_\_\_ hours or \_\_\_\_ days.
- Change the bandage (dressing) every \_\_\_\_\_ hours or \_\_\_\_\_ days. If the dressing sticks, moisten it with soapy water and gently remove it. Apply ointment on the wound only as directed.
- Follow your discharge instructions for how often to change your bandage (dressing). In most cases, after 48 hours, remove the dressing; gently wash the area with mild soap and water once a day, or as directed. Rinse off the soap. Pat the area dry with a clean towel. Do not rub the wound. This may cause bleeding.
- Rest and elevate the injured area until the pain and swelling has improved.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your health care practitioner.
- Avoid stretching a sutured wound.
- Drink enough fluids to keep your urine clear or pale yellow.
- Follow up with your health care provider for suture removal as directed.
- Once healed, use sunscreen on your wound for the next 3 to 6 months so the scar will not darken.

### SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your wound becomes red, swollen, hot, or tender.
- You have increasing pain in the wound.
- You have a red streak that extends from the wound.
- There is pus or a bad smell coming from the wound.
- You have a fever.
- You have persistent bleeding from the wound.

**This general advice cannot cover all possible problems. If there is concern, please contact your physician, healthcare provider or the Emergency Department without delay.**