

When to worry?

- The main complication of wounds is infection.
- The signs and symptoms of a wound infection include:
 - Redness around the wound
 - Swelling to the area
 - Heat around the wound
 - Increased pain to the area
 - Any discharge from the wound.
 - Any redness tracking away from the wound.

Resources/contacts

- Your local pharmacy - www.nhs.uk.
- Your GP surgery - please contact your GP when the surgery is open, and call 111 when the GP is closed.
- NHS 111 provides advice for urgent care needs and is open 24hrs a day. They can arrange urgent GP appointments and calls from landlines and mobiles are free.
- NHS Choices – www.nhs.uk.
- www.whittington.nhs.uk.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please contact us on 020 7288 3182. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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Wound care and Wound closure for Children

A parent's guide



Introduction to wound care

- Minor injuries and cuts are a common presentation to the paediatric emergency department.
- There are many different types of wound and therefore they are treated differently with a variety of dressings.
- Most cuts and grazes can be treated at home, stop the bleeding, clean the wound and cover with a plaster.
- Always keep any dressing dry; a wet dressing will encourage any infection.
- If the wound is caused by a foreign object, such as glass, we may complete a X-Ray to ensure no bits of foreign body are left in the wound.

Introduction to Wound Closure

- There are many different types of wounds, and therefore we have a number of ways of closing them effectively.
- The main aim of any wound closure is to provide your child with the least possible scarring with the minimal amount of discomfort.

Steri strips

- These adhesive strips help hold the edges of a small wound together and encourage the skin to heal.
- You can remove the steristrips yourself in 5-7 days. Wetting the stripstrips and wound itself will make this easier to do.
- You may find that the ends of the steristrip may lift up over the course of time, this is normal.

Wound Glue

- This is special medical glue that joins the edges of the wound together while the wound starts to heal underneath. It has the same appearance as a scab.
- Glue is used on the majority of wounds in children as it is pain free and is known to leave a neater scar than other methods.
- The opposing side of a wound are joined and the glue is placed over the top.
- Sometimes both steristrips and wound glue are used in combination. The glue needs to be kept dry to 5-7 days.
- Once the wound is wet, don't pick the scab, continue to wash and wet the wound as normal and the scab should fall off as normal.
- If your child picks at the scab, there is more chance of the wound opening up again.

Stitches (sutures)

- The length of time that stitches need to stay in place depends on the area of the body that have been applied to.
- Stitches over joints tend to stay in place for 10 days; stitches to the face or on limbs usually stay in place for 5-7 days.
- Keep the affected area dry for 48 hours.
- Do not attempt to remove the stitches yourself.
- Once you have left the emergency department, make an appointment with the nurse at your GP surgery who can remove these for you.

Discharge advice for wound closure

- Keep the wound clean and dry
- Avoid showering or bathing the affected area for five days. This will give the wound more time to start the healing process and heal well.
- Do not cover the wound with any plasters or anything waterproof, it will make the wound soggy and more prone to infection and poor healing. Most wounds will take 2-3 weeks to heal, but it may take a few weeks longer to heal completely.
- We don't usually administer antibiotics, unless the wound looks infected, or if the wound was caused by a human or dog bite.