

Wound care advice

Peanut Ward

This leaflet offers information and advice about how to look after your child's wound and/or sutures after you have been discharged home. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

After surgery

- Give your child paracetamol or ibuprofen today (following the drug packet's instructions); this will keep them as comfortable as possible when the local anaesthetic wears off. Local anaesthetic works for a different length of time on each person. It may start to wear off after a couple of hours on one person but last for 4 or 5 hours on others. We advise you to administer the painkillers regularly (following the instructions) for as long as required up to 48 hours.
- Keep the area dry for at least 48 hours or as instructed.
- If brown tape or steri-strips have been applied over the suture line (stitches), please try to keep them in place. If your child pulls them off earlier please do not worry, you can cover the suture line with a simple plaster if needed.
- After 48 hours, even with the tape in place, your child may have a brief shower, but must not soak in the bath. Allow the tape to dry naturally and it should remain in place.
- If the wound is on your child's lip then applying petroleum jelly, twice a day, will stop their lips from becoming dry and prevent too many scabs forming around the stitches.
- If we have used stitches that have to be removed, we will either make arrangements for you to attend the Paediatric Assessment Unit for removal or ask you to see your GP or Practice Nurse. Having stitches removed is not a painful procedure but it can be a little uncomfortable and your child will need to keep quite still to allow this.
- If dissolvable stitches have been used, then after 7 days, and as long as the wound is closed with no oozing, you should **lightly** massage the suture line with a non-perfumed moisturiser to encourage the stitches to fall out. You need to apply the cream and massage at least twice a day.

Scarring

After a wound has healed, the scar will continue to alter as new connective tissue (collagen) is formed and blood vessels return to normal, causing the scar tissue to change pigmentation (colour). Scar tissue continues to mature for up to two years. Within this time, the scarred skin can become: thick and lumpy and dry and itchy. In order to promote a flat, flexible

mature scar, it is essential to moisturise and massage the area. This can be started once the stiches have been removed or have dissolved.

Scar massage

- Using a non-perfumed moisturiser, apply firm pressure and massage in round circular motions along the suture line, so that the skin turns white (blanches).
- Massage the suture line two to three times a day.
- Wash the area before each new application of moisturiser.

Sun Protection

It is important to protect the scar from the sun as any sun damage in the early stages can leave the scar red and more noticeable. When in the sun, keep the scar covered and, in addition, use a high factor sun cream, SPF 30 or above.

Follow up

In seven days your child will need to have a wound check and review. This is usually with your GP or Practice Nurse. If the surgeon requests a follow-up hospital outpatient appointment, we will let you know and a letter will be sent to you to confirm the date and time.

Contact us

We are always here for telephone advice or, if necessary, to see you in the Paediatric Assessment Unit.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns or questions.

Peanut Ward

Tel: 01342 414469

Paediatric Assessment Unit

Tel: 01342 414468

Please ask if you would like this leaflet in larger print or an alternative format.