



# Post-operative wound care advice

A discharge guide for patients

## Wound care advice

This flyer provides important information on how to care for your wound after your surgery. If you have concerns about the condition of your wound, please refer to the back of this flyer for contact information.

## Wound care guidelines

After surgery, it is common to have an incision or a “cut” through the skin that will require observation and care to heal correctly. This incision is called a surgical wound.

Following your discharge from hospital, please follow the guidelines below to help your surgical wound heal, unless otherwise directed by your healthcare professional.



**Wash your hands** or clean with alcohol gel before and after touching your wound.



It is advisable to **avoid showering or bathing** for 24 hours post-procedure if there is no waterproof dressing.



**Do not use skin cleaners**, alcohol, peroxide, iodine or soaps with antibacterial chemicals. These can damage the wound tissue and slow your healing.



**Do not put any lotion, cream or herbal remedies on or around your surgical wound** without asking your doctor first.

Note: These are guidelines only and are not to be substituted for medical care.

## Stay smoke free after surgery

It is important to give your body plenty of time to heal, recover and rest. You will give yourself the best chance for a quicker recovery by not smoking or vaping.



# Care following dressing removal

Your surgical wound dressing will be removed as per your doctor's instruction. If the wound is dry with no sign of redness, inflammation or fluid leakage, then no further dressings are needed.

Wound care instructions:

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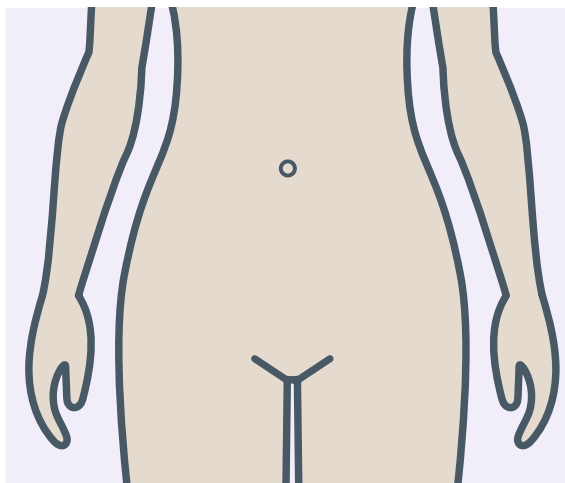
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Example: "Remove dressing three days from surgery date to assess the condition of your wound. If wound is dry, you may have a normal shower and dry the wound by gently patting the wound with a clean, soft towel."

## When to seek further treatment

You should seek medical treatment if you see any of the following changes around the incision, including:

**Increased redness/swelling/bleeding/wound is larger or deeper**



-  **Pain/discomfort**
-  **Fever/unwell**
-  **Bad smell**
-  **The wound looks dried out or dark**

If required your doctor, midwife or nurse will draw the incision(s) on the diagram above

If there is a change in drainage/discharge colour or thickness, please also seek medical advice.

## Contact information

Please see your GP or contact Healthdirect on 1800 022 222 if you have any concerns. If you unable to obtain assistance as outlined above, please present to your nearest Emergency Centre or Emergency Department.

This content has been adapted with permission from the Royal Perth Hospital's information sheet, Post operative wound advice.

The information provided is for information purposes only. If you are a patient using this publication, you should seek assistance from a healthcare professional when interpreting these materials and applying them to your individual circumstances.



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