



Post-operative wound care advice

A discharge guide for patients

Please note: These are guidelines only and not to be used as a substitute for medical care.

Wound care guidelines

An incision is a cut through the skin that is made during surgery. It is also called a surgical wound.

Following your discharge from hospital, please follow the information below to help your surgical wound heal.

General care

- ▶ Wash your hands before and after touching your wound.
- Avoid using a wash cloth to wash your wound. Gently pat dry your wound with a clean towel after your shower.
- > Avoid wearing tight clothing that rubs against the surgical wound while it is healing.
- Avoid using skin cleansers, alcohol, peroxide, iodine or soaps with antibacterial chemicals. These can damage the wound tissue and slow your healing.
- Always keep your wound and the surrounding skin free of any lotion, cream or herbal remedies.

Care following dressing removal

Your surgical wound dressing will be removed as per post-operative instructions. If the wound is dry with no signs of redness, inflammation or wound ooze, then no further dressings need to be applied.

Your wound care instructions:	
	You may have a normal shower.
	Dry your wound by gently patting with a clean, soft towel.

When to seek further treatment

You should seek medical treatment if you see any of the following changes in or around the wound:

- increasing redness
- increasing pain
- swelling
- bleeding
- ▶ the wound is larger or deeper
- the wound looks dried out or dark
- ▶ If any drainage is coming from in or around the wound and is increasing
- ▶ If any drainage is a thick, green or yellow pus or smells bad
- ► Or if you develop a fever.

If you are a maternity or gynaecology patient, please contact the Emergency Centre at King Edward Memorial Hospital on 6458 1433 or your nearest hospital if you are outside of the metropolitan area.

Alternatively, please contact your General Practitioner or call Health Direct (24 hour health advice) 1800 022 222.

If you are unable to obtain assistance as detailed above, you should present to the nearest emergency department.





This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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Acknowledgement: This information has been adapted from Fiona Stanley Hospital "Post operative wound care advice – a discharge guide for patients" 2016.

Publication reviewed by WNHS Community Advisory Council (August 2017).

Compiled by: WNHS Infection Prevention & Management

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