

Pain

The local anaesthetic will usually wear off in one or two hours. Your wound will be red and sore for at least 48 hours. If you are in pain, we recommend that you take paracetamol as instructed by your doctor or nurse. It is best to avoid ibuprofen and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) as pain killers as they can enhance bleeding.

Do not stop your aspirin or other blood thinning drugs unless instructed by the hospital or your GP.

Infection

Every precaution is taken before, during and after your surgery to prevent a wound getting infected. On very rare occasions some wounds may become infected.

Symptoms of infection include an unpleasant smell, discharge, fever, pain and swelling. If this occurs please contact your GP or practice nurse.

Swelling and bruising

Swelling and bruising may occur, especially if you have had surgery around the face and eyes. This can take 10-14 days to start reducing.

If swelling occurs, then resting and using a pillow for extra support and to elevate legs and/or arms can help reduce the swelling.

Nutrition and Diet

To help your wound heal, we recommend a healthy balanced diet with protein and foods rich in vitamins A, C and mineral zinc e.g. peas, broccoli, citrus fruits, tomatoes.

Smoking

Smoking means wounds heal more slowly. You are advised to stop or reduce your smoking during the healing process.

Scarring

You should avoid physical activities that put a strain on any scar for two or three weeks. After the stitches or clips have been removed, massage the scar gently with a moisturiser to help it settle.

Scarring occurs after all surgery. Skin strength normally returns to normal in approximately 6 weeks.

Numbness

You may find that you feel numb around the scar. This usually improves with time. If you have any concerns please discuss these with GP, practice nurse or health care assistant at The Drive Surgery.

Further information

If you have any concerns or would like further information regarding how to look after your wound, please seek advice from The Drive Surgery practice nurse or health care assistant.

Looking after your wound following your operation

A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS

A service for people registered with

THE DRIVE SURGERY – bringing your care closer to home

Making things easier for you after your operation

There is a service for people registered with The Drive Surgery to help you take care of your wound after you have had your operation in hospital. Instead of going back to the hospital, you will now come to your own GP practice to have your wound checked and dressed.

After your operation

When you leave hospital you will be told about how to look after your wound. You will be given some written information and a letter for your GP.

You will also be given a pack to take home which will include extra dressings and anything else that you need. For example, you may be given a special tool for removing stitches or clips.

Make sure you keep the written information and the pack in a safe place.

Making an appointment at The Drive Surgery

When you get home from hospital, call us on **02085543014** or **02085546287** and make an appointment with the practice nurse or health care assistant. You will be offered 20 minutes appointment for wound care management.

The hospital will advise you when the appointment will be needed. Please call us as soon as possible so that you can book your appointment.

When you come for your appointment to see practice nurse or health care assistant, you will need to take with you the written information and the pack from the hospital.

Looking after your wound at home

Keep any dressing in place for the first two days, unless you have been advised to leave it on for longer.

You can still wash but avoid getting the wound wet.

Wounds closed with stitches, glue, steri-strips or clips

Some wounds will be closed with steri-strips, glue or dissolvable stitches. Before you leave hospital you will be told what type of wound closure you have.

Do not soak the wound in the bath or swim until the stitches/clips have been removed.

If you have been advised not to put any dressing on the wound after 48 hours, please continue to clean the wound on a daily basis until the stitches or clips are removed.

A dressing e.g. a plaster can be applied to protect the wound and keep it clean. The dressing should be changed if it is dirty, wet or lifting off.

Open Wounds

Open wounds are often more uncomfortable than wounds closed with stitches.

After two days, you can bath and shower as normal. Clean the wound gently with tap water and cotton wool pads. Lightly pat the wound dry. Cover the wound with the dressings that have been given to you by the hospital.

Open wounds heal more slowly. A large wound can take 4 weeks or more to heal.

Abscesses

If you have had an abscess drained, you will need to attend your GP practice for daily dressings for at least one week, maybe longer. The dressing changes will reduce to every other day, and then less frequently as the wound heals.

Most people will find the dressing change uncomfortable during the first week. You will have been given pain relief from the hospital and we recommend that you take this medication at least 30 minutes before your appointment to make the dressing change more comfortable.

The wound will be dressed with a splash-proof dressing. This means that you will be able to have a shower but not a bath. It can take between 4 and 6 weeks for these types of wound to heal.

Bleeding

Slight oozing or spotting of blood on the dressing is normal. However, if you experience heavy bleeding, apply firm, continual pressure to the area for 20 minutes. This will usually stop the bleeding. If bleeding continues, repeat continual pressure for a further 20 minutes. If bleeding still persists, please contact us on **020 8554 3014** or **0208 554 6287** for advice.