



Discharge Instructions for Surgical Wounds (primary closure)

The primary closure wounds are classified as clean or clean-contaminated wounds. There are 3 methods for surgical wound closure, include of sutures, adhesives, such as surgical glue, adhesive strip of tape, and staples. The doctor will assess the wound and determine how best to treat it.

- **While at home, you must do change dressing as request**

The purpose of change dressing is to prevent post-operative wound infection and enhance wound healing.

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All information above has been reviewed by the Plastic Surgery specialists
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- **Before changing the wound dressing**

Preparation of Wound care supplies

- I. Clean gloves
- II. Sterile saline solution(500ml bottle or 20ml single-use plastic ampoules)
- III. Beta-iodine (10% Povidone-iodine)(as request)
- IV. Topical Wound Agents, such as antibiotic ointments, creams, gels:
use by the doctor's orders
- V. Sterile gauze pads(The choice of gauze size will vary based on the wound's size and depth— 1x1 inch, 2x2 inch, 3x3 inch or 4x4 inch, etc.)
- VI. Cotton swabs
- VII. Gauze bandage, elastic bandage (as request)
- VIII. Medical tapes (paper tape, transparent tape, silicon tape or retention tape, etc.)

● **Steps of Change Dressing**

- I. Clean the area where you will set out your dressing supplies. Place the dressing supplies on the clean and hard surface.
- II. Remove all the accessories on your hands and wrists
- III. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Dry your hands well with a paper towel or clean towel and then use the towel to turn the tap off.
- IV. Put on clean gloves
- V. Remove the old dressing and dispose of it. Take the old dressing off

carefully by gently lifting the edge and moving around the edges of the dressing until the entire dressing is off. Be careful to avoid causing injury to the wound and skin around the wound.

VI. Remove the gloves

VII. Wash your hands after removal of the gloves.

VIII. Put on clean gloves. (you may need to wear sterile gloves if request)

IX. Use the cotton swab and soak with sterile saline solution. Clean the old ointment or wound discharge

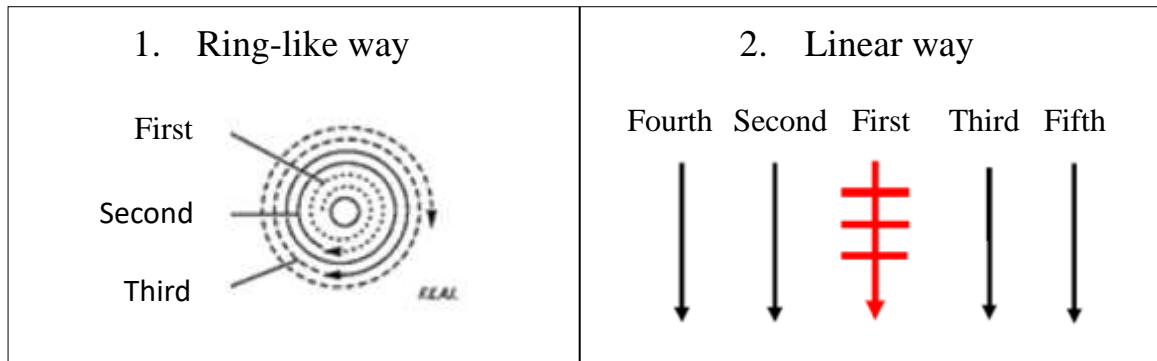
X. Assess the wound and surrounding skin

XI. Use the cotton swab and soaked-swab with beta-iodine solution if request.

➤ There are 2 ways to clean the wound with cotton swab.

i. From clean to dirty (incision, then outer edges)

Start at the cleanest area of the wound and move outwards to the dirtiest area. The suture line is considered the “least contaminated” area and is cleansed first. Clean the wound using a circular stroke, starting at the centre and moving outward as shown in the figure 1.



ii. From top to bottom

For linear wound, clean the wound from top to bottom in one motion, starting directly at the wound and moving outwards as shown in the Figure 2.

XII. Wait for 2 minutes and then use saline-soaked cotton swab to repeat the step XI.

XIII. Make sure use the swabs once only and avoid wiping back and forth.

Never re-introduce them to a clean area once they have been contaminated.

XIV. Apply the topical wound agent as request.

XV. Put the sterile gauze and tape the dressing in place.

XVI. Use the gauze bandage or elastic bandage as request. Otherwise, you may use the tubular elastic netting to hold the dressings.

XVII. Wash your hands with soaps or antiseptic skin cleanser.

● **Q&A**

I. When should I change the Steri-strips?

Steri-Strips are thin adhesive bandages used to help close the

outermost layer of skin after surgery and can help reduce scarring. The doctors may use them in addition to stitches, absorbable stitches or after stitches have been removed to hold the skin together. While the steri-strips getting dirty, loosening, or falling off on their own, you may change them. Otherwise, you must change them as request. Put the Steri-strip over the two sides of the cut so that it holds the wound together. Start with one side, and then pull the other half over to help close the wound. Stick the second half of the Steri-Strip on the other side of the wound. Don't apply it in the same direction as the cut.

II. May I take a shower or have a bath?

If You have been told to keep the wound dry, it's usually better to have a shower after an operation under flow controlled water and avoid getting the wound wet. Check with your surgeon or nurse whether you can shower or have a bath, as it may depend on the type of surgery you have had and how your wound has been closed.

● Come back to hospital or contact us right away if you notice:

- I. Fever (body temperature over 38°C)
- II. Increasing Pain, swelling, redness, purulent or pus discharge, oozing(keep bleeding) or the wound smells

● References:

Cai Xiangwei, Guo Zhenchan, Qiu Cunmei, Yu Peiyu, Lin Qiuzi (2020).

Improving the accuracy of self-care of drainage tube in patients with abdominal emergency. *Chang Gung Nursing*, 31(1), 62-76.

Let's take a test to confirm that you have a thorough understanding.

1. Redness, warmth, swelling, pain, and change in wound secretions around the wound. If there is bad smell, suppuration and continuous bleeding, you need to return to the hospital for treatment.
Yes No Not sure

2. The dressing must be changed at any time if there is a lot of secretion from the wound or if the wound is stained with urine or feces
Yes No Not sure

3. When disinfecting the wound, the cotton swab can be moved back and forth across the wound.
Yes No Not sure

4. The scope of wound disinfection should be 5 cm larger than the wound.
Yes No Not sure

5. There are many factors that affect wound healing, such as age, chronic diseases (such as diabetes), Nutritional status and medications (e.g. steroids).
Yes No Not sure