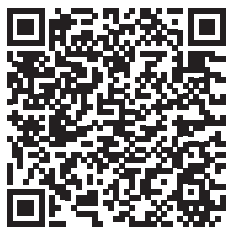


An incision is the cut in your skin made during your surgery.

The incision may be sewn closed (stitches), glued, stapled, or taped.

Taking care of your incision after your surgery is important to reducing the chance of getting an infection and helping you to return to normal sooner.



To listen to the instructions:
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Dressing Removal/ Incision Care

Instructions and Q&A



1 Can I take a bath when I get home?

- DO NOT take a bath, sit in a hot tub, or get into a swimming pool.
- DO NOT soak your incision in water.
- YOU CAN take a shower beginning the day you remove the dressing.

2 When should I remove the dressing?

- REMOVE the dressing two (2) days after your surgery.
- DO NOT REMOVE any small strips across your incision (“Steri Strips”). Let them fall off on their own.

3 What are the steps I should follow to remove the dressing?

- CLEAN YOUR HANDS either by washing your hands with soap and water or using waterless hand sanitizer.
- LOOSEN THE TAPE around the dressing using alcohol on a cotton ball to dab the edges of the tape until it comes loose.
- NEVER tug on or rip off the tape or the dressing.
- REMOVE THE DRESSING slowly. If the dressing sticks to your incision put clean warm water on a cotton ball and dab the dressing until it comes loose. Never pull on the dressing.
- CHECK the dressing. If the dressing has a foul smell or if pus is coming from your incision, call your doctor.
- DISCARD the old dressing in the trash and clean your hands again.

4 How do I manage my incision when taking a shower?

- BEFORE EACH SHOWER gather a clean wash rag/cloth, a bath towel, underclothes (underwear and bra) and clothes. These should all be freshly washed.

- TAKE A SHOWER, not a bath, every day beginning the day you remove the dressing. Stand so that the shower stream does not spray directly onto your incision.
- CLEAN YOUR INCISION using plain soap on the clean, wet wash rag/cloth. Gently soap your incision and then the rest of your body. Then rinse your body and your incision, without letting the shower stream spray directly onto your incision. Do not scrub your incision.
- PAT YOUR INCISION DRY using the clean bath towel, and then dry the rest of your body.
- DO NOT USE alcohol, peroxide, or iodine to clean your incision.
- DO NOT APPLY lotions, creams, or herbal remedies to your incision.
- WEAR newly washed underclothes (underwear, bra) and clothes.

5 What if I cannot shower?

- TAKE A SPONGE BATH every day beginning the day you remove the dressing.
- BEFORE EACH SPONGE BATH gather two clean wash rags/cloths, a bath towel, underclothes (underwear and bra) and clothes. These should be freshly washed.
- FOR YOUR SPONGE BATH sit in a chair. Use plain soap on a clean, wet wash rag/cloth to gently soap your body starting with your face, then your neck, chest and back, arms, underarms, legs and then your private parts. DO NOT touch your incision. Rinse the wash rag/cloth and then wipe the soap off of your body.
- DRY YOUR BODY using the clean bath towel, being careful not to touch your incision.
- CLEAN YOUR INCISION using plain soap and the second clean wash rag/cloth.

Wet and soap the clean wash rag/cloth. Gently soap your incision to remove any old blood or drainage. Do not scrub your incision.

- RINSE YOUR INCISION using the rinsed wash rag/cloth, gently remove the soap. Do not rub hard.
- PAT YOUR INCISION DRY using the clean bath towel.
- DO NOT USE alcohol, peroxide, or iodine to clean your incision.
- DO NOT APPLY lotions, creams, or herbal remedies to your incision.
- WEAR newly washed underclothes (underwear, bra) and clothes.

6 What should I do if my incision bleeds?

- PLACE a clean, dry dressing/gauze over the area that is bleeding.
- APPLY gentle pressure for a two (2) to three (3) minutes. Do not push too hard.
- The bleeding should stop after two (2) to three (3) minutes.

7 When to call the doctor?

- If the bleeding does not stop after you follow the instructions listed on number 6 above.
- If your incision breaks open.
- If the redness around your incision increases or spreads more than a half of inch from your incision.
- If you see pus coming from your incision.
- If you get a temperature of 100.5 degrees or higher.