



## Information for patients, relatives and carers

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# Wound Care

Your wound may have been treated by sutures (stitches), wound closure strips (butterfly stitches) or glue. The method depends on the type of wound.

## General Wound Care

Keep the wound dry, wash around the wound where possible. Do not cover with waterproof plasters, plastic bags etc, except possibly for short periods as this will make the wound soggy and prone to infection.

## Healing and nutrition

Taking care to ensure that your diet contains the recommended daily allowance of protein, carbohydrates and vitamins and stopping smoking will help your wound to heal in the quickest possible time.

## Wound infections

Even after thorough cleaning, a small number of wounds will inevitably become infected. Please seek advice from your GP if the cut or surrounding area becomes:

- Red
- Swollen
- Increasingly painful
- Develops a discharge
- If the cut re-opens

## Wound closure strips

Keep them dry and leave them in place for five to seven days.

To remove the strips, moisten with water for about 10 minutes and carefully peel them off. If they are not easily removed by this method, trim them and allow them to drop off, naturally.

## Stitches

If your stitches are non-dissolvable, they should be removed after seven to 10 days. You should contact your GP surgery to make an appointment for the sutures to be removed.

## Glue

Keep the wound dry for five days. The glue does not need to be removed and will drop off by itself when the wound is healed. A scab will form on the wound which will go away once you start washing the area.

There is a small chance that the wound will re-open. Do not worry if this occurs but come back and we can re-glue if necessary.

## Tetanus

Tetanus is a serious infection which is acquired through open wounds. It affects 20 to 60 people per year in the UK.

Following an initial course of five vaccinations, which are routinely given as a baby, pre-school and age 15 years, there is no need for further boosters apart from under exceptional circumstances.

We would recommend that you contact your GP as soon as possible to check that you are fully immunised.

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① If you have further concerns about your condition, please contact your GP. If you are not sure what to do, call 111 or get help from 111 online: <https://111.nhs.uk/> [When to use NHS 111 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email [pals@york.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@york.nhs.uk)

An answer phone is available out of hours.

## **Leaflets in alternative languages or formats**

If you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print, Easy Read or audio, please ask the staff who are looking after you.

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