

# Caring for your Incision AFTER SURGERY

After your surgery, certain precautions should be taken in regards to your incision site.



## Wash your hands

Good hand washing is key to preventing infection of your incision.



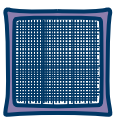
## Showering after surgery Regardless of your wound closure method, you may take a shower after your surgery.

- DO NOT make the water too hot. The heat can cause dizziness and increase your risk of falling.
- It is a good idea to have someone at home when you take your first few showers.
- When you shower, let water run over the wound, but do not rub. Pat the wound gently with a soft towel to dry.



## Be careful with your incision

- DO NOT let pets or small children sit on your lap or sleep with you.
- Avoid other situations that may put strain on your incision site.



## Changing your dressing (IF present)

- Small spots of clear, red or yellow drainage are normal. If drainage occurs, place clean dry gauze over your incision.



## Abdominal Binder

Your physician will advise if a binder is necessary, and send it home with you if indicated. This binder is intended to provide comfort by supporting your abdominal muscles when you move about.

## Reasons to Call the Office

- Skin around the wound is more red, swollen or feels hot.
- Fluid builds up under the dermabond or Tegaderm™.
- Wound smells bad.
- Wound starts draining fluid that is yellow or green.
- You have a fever over 101° F or 38° C.
- Pain is increasing or not well controlled with pain medications.
- Area of drainage becomes larger than a silver dollar within an 8 hour period.

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Below you will find instructions specific to the type of wound closure used after your surgery. If you are unsure of the type of wound closure you have, please call your physician's office.



## STERI-STRIPS™

### IF you have Steri-Strips™ (small strips of tape over the incision)

- No additional bandaging is necessary, but it is okay to cover with a gauze pad if it makes you more comfortable.
- DO NOT remove the Steri-Strips™. They will fall off on their own, usually within 10–14 days. Your provider may instruct you to remove the steri-strips sooner.
- If you have a Tegaderm™ (clear plastic dressing) over your steri-strips, leave it in place until your post-op appointment unless you develop an allergy to the Tegaderm™. Symptoms of an allergy include redness, irritation, itching or rash.



## STAPLES

### IF you have staples

- You may place a dry dressing (gauze pad) over your staples to avoid sensitivity from clothes touching them.
- Your surgeon will remove the staples at your follow-up visit.



## DERMABOND ADHESIVE

### IF you have dermabond adhesive (glue)

- Do not pick, scratch or rub the glue on the wound. This ensures the glue does not loosen before the wound heals.
- Do not apply any cream, lotion or ointment to the skin near the wound. It could loosen the glue before the wound heals.