

## Suture Care

### **Introduction**

An open skin wound can result from various injury mechanisms, such as blunt trauma or lacerations. Suturing is a prevalent wound closure method, intended to expedite the healing process and manage bleeding. The wound's location and condition typically influence the choice of closure method.

### **Procedure**

The suturing process involves the following steps:

1. Cleaning the wound with an antiseptic solution.
2. Injecting local anesthetics around the wound to alleviate procedural pain.
3. Using a specialized needle and thread to stitch the wound, approximating the wound edges and securing them with knots.
4. Dressing the sutured wound for protection.

### **Potential Risks and Complications**

Possible complications may include:

1. Pain or numbness at the wound site.
2. Wound infection.
3. Wound dehiscence (separation of the wound).
4. Allergic reaction to local anesthetics.

### **Uncommon but Serious Complications**

In rare instances, the following serious complications may occur:

1. Injuries to nerves, vessels, or neighbouring structures.
2. Severe allergic reactions to local anesthetics, potentially fatal.

### **Aftercare**

Guidelines for optimal wound healing:

1. Keep the wound clean and dry. Avoid soaking the wound. If it gets wet, please visit the General Out-patient Clinic for wound dressing.
2. If the wound is on your arm or leg, elevate the injured limb for 24-48 hours to alleviate pain and swelling.

3. For scalp wounds, you may gently wash your hair after 48 hours and pat the area dry.
4. Avoid applying anything to the wound unless advised by your doctor.
5. For wound checks, dressings, or stitch removal, please follow the instructions given for visits to the General Out-patient clinic.
6. Seek immediate medical attention from your doctor or the Accident and Emergency department if you experience increased pain, redness, bleeding, pus discharge, numbness, swelling around the wound, or fever.
7. Complete your tetanus immunization as directed.

### **Stitches Removal**

The timing for stitches removal depends on the wound type and its location. Typically, stitches are removed between 5 to 14 days' post-procedure. You will receive instructions about stitch removal upon discharge.

### **Healing Process**

Post-procedure expectations include:

1. Wound pain: Simple analgesics, like paracetamol, can alleviate wound pain. If pain persists despite medication, consult your doctor.
2. A crust or scab will form over the healing wound. Do not pick at the crust as it can lead to scarring and infection; it will fall off naturally.
3. Scarring: Scars are a natural part of the healing process following skin damage. The final scar appearance depends on the original wound's extent, your skin's inherent qualities, and scar care.

### **Remarks**

The occurrence of complications depends on the injury's severity and may arise even with precise operations. While it's impossible to outline all potential complications, the above list includes some of the significant complications that may occur.