

Woosehill Medical Centre

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Minor Surgery post-op advice (PIL)

After minor surgery you may have a dressing over the wound. Please keep the dressing clean and dry for at least 2 days after which time it can be changed/removed – you will be advised at the end of the appointment if you can remove the dressing or need to apply another. If you have had steristrips applied (small sticky strips) let them fall off naturally. You can buy a waterproof dressing from any Pharmacy, which will then allow you to shower more easily e.g. Mepore Ultra. Please avoid soaking the dressing in the bath as this may delay healing. The vast majority of people have no problems after minor surgery. If you have had stitches used, you will have a follow up appointment arranged to remove the stitches usually in 7-10days.

The following may occur after any operation:

- **Pain / Discomfort / Inflammation**

Normally you will get some slight redness around the stitches (if stitches were used); this usually settles when the stitches have been removed. Take some paracetamol or ibuprofen unless you are allergic or have problems with this medication. Please avoid aspirin.

- **Bleeding**

It is normal for a small amount of bleeding to occur immediately after minor surgery. If there is excessive bleeding, please apply firm pressure through a folded towel directly to the wound for 10-15 minutes. All operations can cause bleeding and bruising, very occasionally a wound may bleed sufficiently to require restitching.

- **Infection**

Sometimes the area treated may have been infected before the operation or can become infected afterwards. This gives rise to pain, swelling and sometimes green or yellow pus. Sometimes antibiotics are required, however not usually for a mild infection.

If pain is worsening despite painkillers, bleeding persists despite pressure, concerns the wound is infected or any other concerns/queries - contact your GP, the Out of Hours Service (call 111), the Walk in Centre or the A+E Department as appropriate.

- **Scarring.** It is impossible to remove anything without leaving a scar. Generally, the length of the scar is 2-3 times the width of the lesion to be removed. Use at least SPF30 sun cream on the scar (and ideally all over sun exposed areas) as it will be more sensitive to sun damage.
- **Stretching of the scar.** Skin flaps can be fragile until healed. They may take several weeks even after removal of stitches to heal properly. A wide stretched scar can occur especially if the dressing has been removed too soon or activities that stretch the scar are resumed too early. Please avoid exertion and stretching of the area for 6 weeks.
- **Hypertrophic or keloid scars.** This is an overreaction to the fibrous/scar tissue in your skin, it occurs a few weeks after surgery. They can occur in anyone but more common in Afro-Caribbean skin types. If you have had previous problems, please let us know.
- **Opening of the wound.** This is extremely rare; it is most likely to occur after the stitches have been removed or if the wound becomes infected. The wound will still heal but may take a little longer.
- **Cautery Scar.** If cautery has been used there may be a crust of charred tissue on the surface of the skin. This will peel off within 2 weeks. The wound will then heal like a graze forming a scaly crust. The new skin may have a slightly different colour to the surrounding skin for a time. Carefully wipe away any loose crust. Please apply Vaseline to the wound every night after 2 weeks for 14 days, this will reduce scarring and improve appearance.