



Excision: Wound Care Instructions

What is an excision?

Your doctor has chosen to perform an excision to remove a suspicious or unwanted area of skin. This tissue is then sent to the lab to confirm what it is (the “diagnosis”), and that it was fully removed.

Depending on the size and location of the excision, your doctor may choose to close the wound by stretching the surrounding skin to form a line, rotating surrounding skin in to fill the hole (a “flap”), or patching the hole with skin from elsewhere on your body (a “graft”). Stitches are used to close the wound and hold it together during the healing process.

Care instructions:

- **Bandage:** The bandage applied today can come off tomorrow. You do not need to wear any bandage thereafter, but you may choose to do so (for example, to protect your clothing from staining). If you choose to wear a bandage, remember to change to a clean one every day.
- **Ointment:** Use a Q-tip to apply **Vaseline** (NOT POLYSPORIN) to the wound site 1-2 times per day, or more often if it seems to be drying out. **We do not recommend Polysporin** as studies have shown that it leads to worse healing.
- **Washing:** You may wash as normal starting tomorrow. It is good to clean the wound site daily. Be gentle: do not scrub the wound site, and gently pat dry.
- **Stitches:** Depending on what type of stitches were used, they will either fall out on their own (*clear stitches*) or will be taken out at your follow-up appointment (*blue stitches*).
- **Pain:** You should not experience much pain following your surgery. For mild pain, Tylenol and/or Advil may be used. You may also be given a prescription for stronger pain-killers.
- **Bleeding:** You may experience a small amount of bleeding from the wound site during the first 48h. If so, apply firm pressure with some gauze directly to the site for 20 minutes **without stopping**. This will resolve most bleeding problems.
- **Signs of infection:** A small amount of redness is a normal part of healing. However, if your wound becomes very red/purple, hot or swollen, it may be infected. Contact your doctor if your wound develops these features.

Call your doctor if:

- *You experience severe pain that is not controlled with Tylenol and/or Advil*
- *Your pain **worsens** after 48h*
- *You experience bleeding that will not stop after 20 minutes of constant pressure*
- *The wound becomes very red, hot, painful or swollen*