

## Patient Information : Stitch(suture) Care



### Cork Emergency Medicine

[EMed.ie](http://EMed.ie)



You have had .....sutures to your .....(part of the body).

#### What to expect

We will give you local anaesthetic to numb the area of your injury. This will wear off between 30 minutes and a few hours later, when you might need to take painkillers. Sutures (thread stitches or metal clips) hold the edges of the wound together in a good position to make a good scar. They do not heal a wound or prevent a scar. The blood clot (scab) that forms on the wound is the first stage of the healing process and should not be cleaned or picked off. Pain, redness and swelling after 2-3 days can be a sign of infection.

If your wound is on your face, the sutures will often be left **uncovered**. On other areas of the body they are covered with a dressing to prevent clothing rubbing or dirt getting into the wound. Sometimes we might use dissolvable sutures, but we usually use stitches that need to be taken out.

**Suture removal** should not be painful although you might feel some mild discomfort. We will recommend a time for you to see your General Practitioner (GP) or Practice Nurse to have the sutures removed.

#### Dos and Don'ts

- **Do** keep the wound clean and dry.
- **Do** elevate (keep raised) the affected part.
- **Do** see your GP or Practice Nurse to have your sutures removed. Take this card with you.
- **Do** give the wound a few days rest after the suture removal. After this you can gently massage the area with Vaseline to soften the scar tissue.
  
- **Don't** use antiseptic solution to clean off the blood clot.

#### When to seek advice

If your wound becomes more painful or you notice increasing redness or swelling contact your GP or return to the Emergency Department.

**Dear GP or Practice Nurse** - Could you kindly remove the sutures on / around.....(date).

Yours sincerely

Signature.....Designation.....

Print Name .....Date .....

If you are concerned, please contact the  
Emergency Department you first attended:

Mercy University  
Hospital  
(021) 4271971

M-UCC at  
SMHC (St.  
Mary's Health  
Campus)  
(021) 4926900

CUH  
(021) 4920200

Mallow General  
Hospital  
(022) 21251

Bantry General  
Hospital  
(027) 52900

