

Suture Care

1. Suture Care for a normal sutured wound:

- Keep sutured wounds completely dry for first 24 hours. If needed, use a sponge bath.
- After 24 hours, can take brief showers.
- Avoid swimming, baths or soaking the wound until sutures are removed. (Reason: Water in the wound can interfere with healing).
- Apply antibiotic ointment (such as Polysporin) 3 times a day (no prescription needed). Reason: to prevent infection and a thick scab.
- Cleanse with warm water once daily or if becomes soiled.
- Change wound dressing when wet or soiled.
- Dressing no longer needed when edge of wound closed (usually 48 hours). EXCEPTION: dressing needed to prevent sutures from catching on clothing.
- For pain relief, give acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) or ibuprofen as needed.

2. Removal Date: Guidelines for when particular sutures (stitches) should be removed approximately:

Face	4-5 days
Neck	7 days
Arms and back of hands	7 days
Scalp	7-10 days
Chest, abdomen or back	7-10 days
Legs and top of feet	10 days
Palms, soles, fingers or toes	12-14 days
Overlying a joint	12-14 days

3. Removal Delays:

- Don't miss your appointment for removing sutures.
- Leaving sutures in too long can leave unnecessary skin marks and occasional scarring.
- It also makes suture removal more difficult.

4. Suture Out Early:

- If the sutures come out early, make an appointment with your physician.
- Reinforce the wound with tape or butterfly Band-Aids until the office visit.

5. Wound Protection: After removal of sutures,

- Protect the wound from injury during the following month.
- Avoid sports that could re-injure the wound. If a sport is essential, apply tape before playing.
- Allow the scab to fall off naturally. Do not try to pick it off. (Reason: prevent scarring)
- Protect the area with sunblock when outside.

6. Call Your Doctor If:

- Looks infected: Increasing redness, increasing swelling, increasing tenderness, puss discharge.
- Fever
- Sutures come out early

Credit: www.healthychildren.org

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Disclaimer: These guidelines are to help the caretaker with treatment at home. However, if you are ever concerned about your child's health, you should see a physician in person.