

Post-Operative Incision Care

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1. Your initial dressing will be removed either by you at home or by a hand therapist. This will be notated on your post-op instructions. You will either have Sutures or Steri-Strips in place.
2. If you have Sutures in place:
 - a. Apply a new clean and dry bandage twice daily. Keep incision clean and dry. Do not apply any ointment unless directed to do so.
 - b. Continue these dressing changes for 2 weeks or until your first post-op visit.
3. If you have Steri-Strips in place:
 - a. Do NOT remove these. They will fall off on their own after 1-2 weeks.
 - i. If Steri-Strips do fall off before 1-2 weeks, do not be concerned, simply continue normal dressing changes.
 - b. You may have CLEAR SUTURE LIMBS visible around your incision, which are normal. Leave these in place until first physician visit.
 - c. Apply a clean, dry bandage each morning.
 - d. You may remove the dressing at bedtime to let the incision air dry.

Example of Steri-Strips (“butterfly strips”) is seen below:



Showering:

You may shower immediately after surgery, however, avoid getting the incision sites wet or saturated. This helps to minimize the chance of infection. You will be able to shower normally without restrictions 2 weeks after surgery after your Physician visit.

IF YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO REMOVE DRESSINGS AT HOME:

1. You should remove your postoperative dressing at home 48 hours after surgery. Remove all gauze and xeroform (yellow gauze). Do not remove the Steri-Strips (see above example).

2. For small incisions and arthroscopic portal sites:

Apply a normal Band-Aid to small incisions/portal sites each morning. You may remove the dressing at bedtime to let the incision air dry.

3. For larger incisions:

Apply a large Adhesive Pad (similar to below – Band Aid or Telfa brand – available at CVS/Walgreens/Rite Aid) to the incision each morning. You may remove the dressing at bedtime to let the incision air dry.

Example of large Adhesive Pads are seen below:

