

POST OPERATIVE WOUND CARE INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS UNDERGOING ELECTIVE SURGERY WITH MR PURKAYASTHA

Mr Purkayastha, consultant surgeon, who is looking after you, has put together some post-operative wound care advice for you:

Your surgical sites have been carefully looked after during your procedure by the team. Care has been taken to close the skin incisions with absorbable sutures (sutures that dissolve away and are absorbed by the body) that take several weeks to absorb but are invisible on the whole to the naked eye on the surface. On top of this special closure, small sterile adhesive strips (steristrips) are used to cover the incision and take the tension off the skin surface at the same time. On top of this a waterproof adhesive dressing is used to completely cover your incision(s).

After surgery please try to keep this outer layer on for as long as possible. Ideally for at least 7 days or even until you have your first post-operative follow up appointment, which is usually 10-14 days after your procedure.

Please try to look after your surgical sites. Avoid any activity that may lead to risk of injuring these areas. You can have a wash the day after surgery but please have your first shower on day 2, with your waterproof dressings on (for example, if your procedure is on a Thursday your first shower should not be before Saturday). If the dressings get sodden, then they can be removed and replaced with the extra dressings that you will be discharged with. Please avoid having baths until you see Mr Purkayastha or one of his team for follow up.

If for some reason, both layers of dressings come off, please do not worry, as long as the skin incisions remain closed, please replace the waterproof dressing to cover the area.

It is normal for surgical sites to be painful for several days, sometimes weeks. Occasionally there may be a small amount of blood stained discharge from the wound if pressure is applied.

If any of the following situations arise, please take a photo of the surgical site concerned and email us at info@lgsc.co.uk and let us know what problems you are having and a member of the team will call you the same day. If you are in severe pain or concerned about a surgical site, please contact Mr Purkayastha's PA. You will also have a number to call 24 hours a day given to you on discharge, depending on which centre you had your surgery. Please call that number if you feel your wound related issue is an emergency or is an out of hours problem.

FAQs

My wound feels a bit lumpy is that normal? Yes this is the case for several weeks after surgery.

The surgical site near my belly button is more painful than the others is that OK? Yes the incision made at this site is often used for the camera port in key hole surgery or to remove a specimen (e.g. the appendix or gallbladder) and so the incision in the muscle underneath is large and so takes longer to heal.

I can feel something like a tiny knot at one end of my wound / scar, what is this? It is exactly that! A tiny knot where the absorbable suture has been tied under the skin.

When can I do sit ups, crunches and that sort of abdominal exercise? This will depend on your type of surgery and your speed of recovery. Mr Purkayastha and his team will guide you on this after the first follow up appointment, however try to avoid heavy lifting for at least 2-3 weeks after any abdominal surgery.

Should I use any creams or ointments on my wound? Not in the first few weeks. After this Mr Purkayastha will advise you on this if needed.

Should I clean my wounds / surgical sites? Please try to leave the sites and dressings alone as much as possible.

What else could be a problem with my surgical sites and what do I do? Wound related complications with our team are rare however the following issues would be things that we would like you to let us know about in the unlikely event that they occur:

1. A painful and red wound +/- discharge: this may indicate a wound infection
2. Clear yellow discharge that is not painful: this is serous fluid and often can discharge with no problems.
3. Pus draining from the wound: this is very unlikely but would signify a wound infection
4. A new painful lump at the wound that is especially worse with coughing, this could be a small hernia at the new surgical incision site.
5. Bruising around a wound: this is normal as surgery is traumatic and will usually resolve on its own.

If any of the above occur and you are worried or have problems please get in touch with us by phone or email.

If you have a large wound due to more major open surgery, then you may have metal skin clips that have been used to close the skin incision. These will need to be removed usually 10-14 days after surgery and an appointment will be arranged for you to have this done. The other wound care advice is the same as for wounds closed with absorbable sutures.

The nurses will go through wound care advice and instructions with you prior to your discharge as well, so please ask them any questions you have or ask Mr Purkayastha, or his team when they review you prior to discharge.

You will be given 3 extra dressing for each surgical site you have prior to discharge. If these are not part of your discharge medication, then please do ask for them as Mr Purkayastha insists that you have spare dressings to take home, whichever centre you have your surgery in.

If you take care of yourself, by eating light healthy meals, staying well hydrated, not smoking and follow the advice above, your wounds will heal well. Taking vitamin C is also a good extra supplement for wound healing.

More information can be found in our **patient information section** on our website at:

<http://www.londongeneralsurgeryclinic.co.uk>

Thank you again for choosing to have your procedure with us.