

Postoperative Wound Care After Skin Surgery

You've had a skin excision that has been closed with sutures. This may include **deep (internal) sutures** (which will absorb) and **removable outer stitches**. Good care now will reduce infection risk, support healing, and help the scar fade over time.

- **Stitch Removal:** *Circle* 7 / 10 / 14 days
- **Micropore Taping:** Start after Day 3 (if advised)
- **Follow-up Visit:** _____

What to Expect & Watch For

- Keep the dressing clean and dry for the first **3 days**.
- Mild swelling, bruising, and tenderness are normal.
- If bleeding occurs, apply **firm pressure for 15–20 minutes** before rechecking (if it's on a limb, elevate slightly if feasible). If it doesn't stop, call the clinic.
- Use **Tylenol (acetaminophen) for pain control**. Avoid Advil, aspirin, or alcohol for 3 days unless directed.
- **Rest for 5-7 days**. Avoid bending, lifting, or strenuous activity to protect the stitches.

Wound Care Instructions (Start on Day 2 - 3)

1. **Remove the dressing gently**. If it sticks, moisten with water or saline.
2. **Clean the wound once daily** using either:
 - **Normal saline:** To make at home: *Mix 1/2 teaspoon of table salt (not pickling or other salt) into 2 cups (500 mL) of cooled, boiled water*
 - **Mild soap and plain tap water**
3. Use a **clean wet Q-tip or gauze** to gently remove any dried blood or ointment.
4. Apply a layer of **Aquaphor® (Eucerin)**, **Vaseline®**, **Cicaplast Baume B5®** (LaRoche Posay) or a thin layer of antibiotic ointment (Polysporin, Fucidin, or Bactroban) **daily** for up to 2 weeks.
5. Cover with Micropore Tape, a dressing, or Band-Aid till the sutures are removed.
6. You may **shower after Day 2-3**, letting water run over the wound.

✗ Do not soak the area (no baths, pools, hot tubs) until the stitches are out or 2 weeks have passed.

Scar Healing Guide: What to Use and When

Healing Phase	What to Use	Why It Helps
Days 0–3 (just after surgery)	Leave the dressing on and keep dry.	Protects the wound and supports early healing.
Days 3–14 (with sutures)	– Aquaphor or Vaseline – Cicaplast Baume B5 – (optional) Micropore tape if instructed	Maintains moisture, prevents crusting, supports gentle barrier repair.
After Sutures Are Removed (wound fully closed) Long-Term (2–12+ weeks)	Standard Care (for most patients): – Continue Aquaphor or Cicaplast daily. Gentle scar massage (1–2x/day). Micropore tape as advised Enhanced Care (<i>if history of keloid scars or for high-tension or cosmetic areas</i>): – Silicone gel or sheeting , e.g.: • <i>NewGel+E</i> (ScarlessCanada.ca) • <i>RejûvaSil</i> • <i>Cica-Care®</i> or <i>ScarAway®</i> sheets	Standard moisturizers keep scars soft. Ongoing care supports collagen remodelling, improves scar softness and appearance. Not everyone needs this. Silicone reduces risk of thick, raised scarring in those with higher risk.

Silicone products are only recommended (up to 6 months) if you’ve had thick, raised, or keloid scars before, or if the area is prone to tension (e.g. chest, shoulder).

When to Call the Clinic

- Worsening redness, swelling, or pain
- Yellow/green discharge (pus)
- Fever or feeling unwell
- Wound opening or separation

After the Wound Has Healed

- Apply **Aquaphor, Cicaplast, or silicone scar gel** at night for **2–3 months**.
- Gentle **scar massage** helps soften and flatten the scar.
- Continue **Micropore tape** if advised for areas under tension (shoulders, chest, joints).

Please contact the clinic at any time if you have questions or concerns about your healing.