

---

## NATURAL WOUND HEALING

Your wound is going to heal naturally. This means that the hole made by the surgery will fill with new skin that grows in from the edges. To help this process the wound needs to be kept clean and moist – free of crusts and scabs.

After the surgery a dressing will be covering the wound. I would suggest keeping the wound **dry** and **covered** for **24 hours**, but if the dressing is firmly stuck it is ok to leave it on longer. After 3 or 4 days a dressing is not normally required.

Although you won't be sent home with a **bleeding** wound, occasionally minor oozing or bleeding may occur later. This can be usually be controlled by **pressing firmly** on the wound for 15 minutes. If the dressing gets soggy, it may need to be replaced.

Avoid **strenuous exercise, bending or heavy lifting** for a few days after surgery. They can cause bleeding into the wound, or splitting of the stitches.

If the wound is **painful**, paracetamol 4-6 hourly usually helps. The discomfort should rapidly improve over the next few days. Rarely, it doesn't, and becomes more painful - you may have got an **infection** requiring treatment with antibiotics, normally available from your GP.

If possible, **avoid smoking** totally for the first week after surgery. Studies have shown that wound healing is significantly affected by smoking, and the infection rate is higher.

### DAILY WOUND CARE AFTER THE DRESSING IS REMOVED:

- Wash your hands.
- Wash the wound carefully with clean water.
- Try and gently remove any dried blood or scabs.
- Use cotton buds or cotton pads for delicate areas.
- Pat the wound dry and cover it thickly with Vaseline or antibiotic ointment. The ointment will keep the wound clean, soft and moist.

### RESULTS:

- Normally results take 2 – 3 weeks to come back from the laboratory. You may be given a follow-up appointment to discuss these. For more minor procedures, you may receive the results in the post. This letter can take several weeks to arrive.
- Sometimes, a second procedure may be required, depending on the results.

### LONG TERM EXPECTATIONS:

- The scar will be very red and firm at first but will settle down.
- The area around your wound may be numb for several weeks or months
- You may feel occasional sharp pains or 'twinges' near the scar as it settles. The skin won't regain full strength for several months.