



Government of Western Australia
North Metropolitan Health Service
Sir Charles Gairdner Osborne Park Health Care Group



Plastic surgery wound care

Helping you look after
your wound at home



Your details

Name: _____

Date of birth: _____ / _____ / _____

Hospital / UMRN Number: _____

Operation: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Doctor: _____

Your next appointment

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Time: _____ : _____

Place: Plastic Dressing Clinic, D Block
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital



Please come to all appointments even if your wound looks to be healing well.

Seek medical advice if you notice:

- ☐ Increasing redness, warmth or swelling
- ☐ Worsening pain not relieved by medication
- ☐ Pus or foul-smelling discharge
- ☐ Fever or chills
- ☐ Wound edges opening

Caring for your wound

Look after your wound

- Keep your wound clean and dry unless advised otherwise, until your review in clinic.
- Leave dressings in place for the time as advised by your surgical team.
- Wash your hands before and after touching your wound or dressing.
- Avoid wetting wounds (no baths, swimming in pools or ocean, or spas) until cleared by your surgeon.
- Mild swelling, bruising and discomfort are normal in the early healing phase
- If appropriate, you may be referred to community services for ongoing wound care.



Facial sutures

If left uncovered apply a thin layer of Emollient® ointment twice a day. Remove old Emollient® with cotton tip applicator and replace with fresh Emollient®

- Only remove paper strips or tape on wounds if advised
- If there any concerns contact the Plastic Dressing Clinic
- Avoid makeup on face until sutures are removed or wounds are healed
- Protect the area from sun exposure using a hat or sunscreen once healed
- Sutures are usually removed **within 5 to 7 days**, unless advised otherwise.



Facial wounds

- Swelling and bruising are expected in the first few days. You may notice this increase up to day 4 post operatively
- Sleep with your head elevated by using extra pillows at night to reduce swelling and bruising
- Avoid strenuous activity, bending, or heavy lifting for the first few days
- Do not pick scabs or crusts as this may affect scarring
- Scar massage or silicone products may be recommended once healed.



Hand injuries

- Keep your hand elevated above heart level as much as possible (in sling provided)
- Move fingers as instructed to prevent stiffness
- Avoid lifting, gripping or weight-bearing until cleared
- Keep dressings clean and dry until otherwise advised
- Report increasing pain, numbness, tingling, or colour change to fingers.



Feet and leg wounds

- Elevate the limb whenever possible to reduce swelling
- Limit walking or standing for long periods in the early recovery phase
- Follow weight-bearing instructions carefully
- Wear any prescribed footwear, boot or dressing as directed
- Wear appropriate footwear to allow for lower leg bandaging
- Notify your team if swelling, pain or redness increases.



Breast surgery

- Wear supportive garments or bras as advised
- Please wear abdominal binder or support garment as advised
- Avoid heavy lifting, pushing, pulling or over extension of arms/shoulders for six weeks.
- Mild swelling, bruising, or firmness is normal during healing.
- Drainage tubes should be well supported and secured to prevent pulling at insertion site. Drain care will be explained before discharge
- If you experience increasing pain, redness or sudden swelling, contact the Plastic Dressing Clinic.



Splints

- **Do not adjust or remove splints** without medical advice
- Keep splints **clean, dry and in place** always unless told otherwise
- Do not shower without protecting the splint from water
- Do not overuse the limb as you may break the splint
- Check fingers or toes daily for colour, warmth and sensation
- If you experience tightness, increasing pain, numbness or swelling, contact the Plastic Dressing Clinic.



Pain management

- Take pain medication exactly as prescribed.
- Simple pain relief (e.g. paracetamol) may be sufficient.
- Avoid anti-inflammatory medications unless approved by your surgeon.
- Increasing pain after initial improvement should be reported.

Contact information

Please contact us if you experience any of the following:

- Increasing pain that cannot be resolved with pain relief medication
- Your wound feels hot, looks red or develops an odour
- Increasing swelling
- Sutures becoming tight
- Your wound continues to ooze
- You have any concerns.

Office hours

Plastic Dressing Clinic:

Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays

8.00am to 3.00pm

(08) 6457 3527

After hours

- Plastic surgery registrar on-call team via switchboard (08) 6457 3333
- Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital Emergency Department via switchboard (08) 6457 3333

For appointment related enquiries, please call (08) 6457 7271.



Seek urgent medical attention if you experience:

- ☐ Increasing redness, warmth or swelling
- ☐ Worsening pain not relieved by medication
- ☐ Pus or foul-smelling discharge
- ☐ Fever or chills
- ☐ Wound edges opening

The information provided is for information purposes only. If you are a patient using this publication, you should seek assistance from a healthcare professional when interpreting these materials and applying them to your individual circumstances.



Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital

- Hospital Ave, Nedlands WA 6009
- General enquiries (08) 6457 3333
- Hearing impaired (TTY) (08) 6457 3900
- scgh.health.wa.gov.au

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.