

Management plan for your child's wound

This leaflet gives information about how you can manage your child's wound once they have left hospital (been discharged). If you have any questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for your child.

First name Last name

Date of birth Hospital number

Wounds

A wound is caused when skin is damaged. Wounds can be caused by a scrape, cut, puncture, blister or surgery.

Management of a wound

Wound care management is different for each person, so specific advice will be given to you by the community nurse. The length of time it will take for the wound to heal is different for each person and each wound, and depends on the location and size.

The community nurse will decide what wound care is appropriate, and this will be updated as the wound heals. The community nursing team might get advice from the tissue-viability team if appropriate.

The community nurse will monitor your child's wound for infection and possible complications. It's important to follow any advice given to you by the community nurse, to make sure your child's wound heals well. You must follow advice given to you about how often to change any dressings. This includes following instructions about letting the wound 'breathe' without a dressing, to support the healing process.

Bathing

The dressings used to cover your child's wound are not waterproof. You should try to keep the dressings clean and dry. We recommend flannel washing at a sink until the wound is fully healed. Getting the wound wet before it's fully healed can cause complications, such as infections which would delay the healing process.

When the wounds are fully healed and your child is ready to start having baths or showers again, it's important to pat the area when washing and drying (do not scrub or rub the wound).

Even though the wound has healed, do not use fragranced soaps and body lotions at first, as they can irritate new skin.

Wounds that are healing can be very itchy and the skin can be dry and irritated by the dressings. It's very important that your child does not scratch the area, as this will cause damage and possible infection.

Sometimes the community nurse might advise for your child to have a bath or shower **before** changing the dressing. **Only do this if the community nurse has told you to.**

Dressing supplies

The community nurse will ask your child's GP to prescribe everything needed to change your child's dressing. Please make sure you contact the GP to arrange to collect the supplies so that the community nurse has the correct dressings available.

When your child is discharged with a wound after surgery, the hospital team should provide you with 2 weeks' worth of dressing supplies so you have enough until the GP prescription is filled.

The community nurses have a very small selection of dressing supplies, but they can only use in exceptional circumstances. They might not have the ideal dressing available, so please make sure you collect any prescriptions.

Please tell the community nurse if you're having any issues collecting your child's prescription, so that they can help you.

How you can help manage your child's wound

- Monitor your child for any **RED** or **AMBER** symptoms (see below) and contact the community nursing team for support if appropriate.
- Take care when positioning and handling your child until the wound has fully healed. Putting pressure directly onto the wound can cause pain and bruising. Please ask us for advice about this.
- Any scabbing or dry areas should be left to fall off in their own time.
- Avoid touching the skin over a wound site. It's very fragile and can be tender and painful. It can also cause skin to breakdown, or start an infection unless the wound is fully healed.
- The community nurse might ask you to change your child's dressings. Follow their advice carefully, and only do what you have been asked to do by a medical professional.
- Follow any instructions about wound care, and get help when necessary.

When the wound is **fully healed**:

- a plain, unperfumed moisturiser can be used to help relieve itching, and improve the appearance of the scar. Massage down the scar line in circular motions.
- It's important to use factor 50 suncream when in direct sunlight, as the area will be sensitive to the sun for about 2 years.

When to get help

RED symptoms

Go to your nearest A&E or call NHS 111 if:

- your child has a high temperature (fever)
- redness is spreading around the wound
- there's increased swelling around the wound
- there's increased pain at the wound
- the wound feels warm to touch
- there is pus or a foul-smelling discharge from the wound
- the wound re-opens
- there's lots of bleeding
- you feel that your child's health has got worse, or you are worried

AMBER symptoms

So that we can tell you what you should do next, contact us if:

- you notice your child's dressing is peeling or starting to come off
- the dressing on the wound gets wet or dirty
- your child is complaining the wound site feels 'itchy'

You can also call the community nursing team or call NHS 111 if you would like to speak to a healthcare professional for advice.

Contact us

Children's community nursing team (CCNT)

Phone: 020 3049 7585, Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm, and on Saturdays 8am to 4pm, including bank holidays.

A nurse might ask you to send photos of your child's wound to

email: gstt.evelinalondonccnteam@nhs.net

For more information about conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **web** www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), **phone** 020 7188 8801 **email** gstt.pals-gstt@nhs.net



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