

*The* ROYAL MARSDEN  
NHS Foundation Trust

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## Care of your wound

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### **Patient Information**



**NHS**

## Introduction

All wounds go through several stages of healing. This leaflet will help you understand how to care for your wound.

## Wound healing

You may be aware of changes as they occur:

- clot formation
- formation of new blood vessels
- formation of new tissue

You may experience any or all of the following sensations, which are normal:

- tingling or slight itching
- a slight lumpy feeling as new tissue forms
- slight pulling around your stitches as your wound heals
- bruising around the site of your wound

## Your stitches

Your wound will have been closed at the end of your operation to assist in the healing process. One of the following four methods will have been used:

**Clips**

**Stitches**

Your clips/stitches should be removed on:

by: .....

**Dissolvable stitches**

These will disintegrate over time and will not need to be removed.

**Steri Strips**

These are strips of adhesive tape. They will fall off of their own accord or you can remove them after a week.

## Your dressing

You will have some kind of dressing on your wound immediately after your operation. This is to help prevent infection. Your type of dressing will be discussed with you before you leave. You will have one of the following:

**Tegaderm post-operative dressing**

This dressing is water resistant so you can have a shower or a bath whenever you like, but avoid soaking in the bath. It may peel off by itself, or if still in place, you may remove it after seven days. You can then leave your wound open to the air.

**Mepore**

This dressing is not waterproof so it is important that you do not get it wet for the first two days. You can remove it after this time and have a shower or a bath, unless you are advised otherwise, but avoid soaking in the bath.

You will be given a replacement dressing before you leave.

**Pressure dressing**

This dressing is an extra gauze pad, which is placed over the Tegaderm or Mepore dressing and fixed with white Mefix tape.

This may be removed before going home or 24-48 hours after your operation.

**Other**

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**Your wound**

Avoid the use of scented soap, talc or bubble bath around the area of your wound as it can cause irritation. Carefully dry your wound after getting it wet by patting it gently with a clean towel.

Do not touch your wound. Do not pull off the scab as it protects the underlying tissue.

**If you have any questions regarding wound care or dressing changes, please contact:**

District nurse .....

Practice nurse .....

For urgent calls between 6pm - 8am ask switchboard: **020 7352 8171** to contact the senior nurse on duty (**Bleep 022**)

## **The Royal Marsden Macmillan Hotline - 020 8915 6899**

You can ring the Hotline 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call us straight away if you are feeling unwell or are worried about the side effects of cancer treatments.

This service provides specialist advice and support to all Royal Marsden patients, as well as to their carers, and both hospital and community-based doctors and nurses caring for Royal Marsden patients.

For further information, please visit  
The Royal Marsden website:

*[www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/your-care/  
support-services/royalmarsden-macmillan-  
hotline](http://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/your-care/support-services/royalmarsden-macmillan-hotline)*

## References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Freephone: 0800 783 7176

Email: [patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk](mailto:patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk)

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[royalmarsden.org](http://royalmarsden.org)

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