

Cuts Closed With Adhesives: Care Instructions

Overview

A cut can happen anywhere on your body.

The doctor used an adhesive to close the cut. When the adhesive dries, it forms a film that holds the edges of the cut together. Skin adhesives are sometimes called liquid stitches.

If the cut went deep and through the skin, the doctor may have put in a layer of stitches below the adhesive. The deeper layer of stitches brings the deep part of the cut together. These stitches will dissolve and don't need to be removed. You don't see the stitches, only the adhesive.

You may have a bandage.

The doctor has checked you carefully, but problems can develop later. If you notice any problems or new symptoms, **get medical treatment right away**.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Keep the cut dry for the first 24 to 48 hours. After this, you can shower if your doctor okays it. Pat the cut dry.
- Don't soak the cut, such as in a bathtub. Your doctor will tell you when it's safe to get the cut wet.
- If your doctor told you how to care for your cut, follow your doctor's instructions. If you did not get instructions, follow this general advice:
 - Do not put any kind of ointment, cream, or lotion over the area. This can make the adhesive fall off too soon.
 - After the first 24 to 48 hours, wash around the cut with clean water 2 times a day. Do not use hydrogen peroxide or alcohol, which can slow healing.
 - If the doctor told you to use a bandage, put on a new bandage after cleaning the cut or if the bandage gets wet or dirty.
- Prop up the sore area on a pillow anytime you sit or lie down during the next 3 days. Try to keep it above the level of your heart. This will help reduce swelling.
- Leave the skin adhesive on your skin until it falls off on its own. This may take 5 to 10 days.
- Do not scratch, rub, or pick at the adhesive.
- Do not put the sticky part of a bandage directly on the adhesive.
- Avoid any activity that could cause your cut to reopen.
- Be safe with medicines. Read and follow all instructions on the label.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.

When should you call for help?



Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have new pain, or your pain gets worse.
- The skin near the cut is cold or pale or changes color.
- You have tingling, weakness, or numbness near the cut.
- The cut starts to bleed.
- You have trouble moving the area near the cut.
- You have symptoms of infection, such as:
 - Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness around the cut.
 - Red streaks leading from the cut.
 - Pus draining from the cut.
 - A fever.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- The cut reopens.
- You do not get better as expected.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/PatientEd>

Enter **P174** in the search box to learn more about "**Cuts Closed With Adhesives: Care Instructions**".

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