

## Wound Care after Suture Removal

### Cleansing

- Wash the wound daily with soap and water and gently pat the area to dry.
- Areas prone to contamination (such as hands) should be washed more often.
- Cover areas prone to contamination or re-injury such as knees, elbows, hands or chin for 5-7 days. A simple Band-Aid is usually enough.
- If steri-strips have been applied, allow them to fall off on their own.

### Minimize Scarring

- Lubricating ointment such as Aquaphor or Vaseline, or antibiotic ointment like polysporin three times a day for 7-10 days **may** reduce scarring
- Products such as Mederma **may** reduce scarring (may be purchased at any grocery or drug store)
- Vitamin E oil **may** reduce scarring
- Gently massaging the scar with these products **may** reduce scarring
- Protect the scar from sun exposure; use hats, clothing and sunscreen according to the location of the cut

### Prevent Re-injury

- Wounds are still healing after sutures are removed. It will take up to seven weeks to reach maximal strength of the scar.
- A direct blow to the healing wound may result in re-injury
- Return to gym or sports is usually OK once sutures are removed; however, severe wounds or wounds over joints may need more healing time

### Observe for Infection

- Call us if you notice any sign of infection, such as increasing redness, pain, swelling, oozing, red streak from the wound, or fever

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