



Wound Cleaning and Dressing Change Instructions

1. Before wound care, **WASH YOUR HANDS!**
2. **Gently remove dressing, and inspect the wound daily for infection. Signs to look for are:**
 - Cloudy or yellow/green colored drainage from the wound (pus)
 - Redness around the wound (a small amount at the edge is normal), or red streaks extending from the wound
 - Increasing tenderness or swelling
 - Fever or chills
 - **For open wounds (no stitches)**, you may see black or white cotton-like material in the wound. Do not remove this material, it assists in preventing bleeding and it will fall out as the wound heals. When it does come out of the wound it does not need to be replaced.

Please call Dr. Tope's office if you notice any signs of infection

3. Gently clean the wound and surrounding area with Q-Tips moistened with hydrogen peroxide. Clean from the center of the wound outward using a circular motion. The peroxide should bubble into a white foam. Some debris may come away easily while cleaning, but **DO NOT pick or rub these crusts**. If the wound begins to bleed, you're being too aggressive. (If the full strength peroxide stings, you may dilute it 1:1 with fresh tap water.)
 - Dry the wound by gently, patting it dry with clean Q-Tips.
 - Gently apply a thick layer of ointment (Bacitracin, Polysporin, plain Vaseline, or Aquaphor Healing Ointment) to the wound using a clean Q-Tip.
4. Cover the wound with a band-aid or a non-stick dressing/non-adhesive gauze pad and paper tape or coban (as directed by Dr. Tope or Nurse). Keep the dressing dry. If it gets wet reapply a dry dressing, otherwise the wound is more apt to become infected.
5. **Open wounds (no stitches) - DO NOT** let a dry scab form or leave the wound open to air for more than the time it takes to change the dressing. For best and fastest healing, the area must be kept clean, moist and covered at all times. Good wound care helps prevent infection and can minimize scarring.

Sutured wounds (stitches) should always be kept moistened with ointment until sutures are removed. After the first 48-72 hours, if there is no crusting or discharge, the dressing may be left off. Please cover your wound with a bandage if you will be exercising or in a dirty or dusty environment.
6. After wound care, **WASH YOUR HANDS!**
7. Continue daily wound care until the site is healed or until the stitches have been removed in _____ days.

If you have any concerns or questions, please call Dr. Tope's office @ 952-746-6090