

# How to Take Care of Your Child's Wound with Stitches, Glue, or Tape

Your child had a wound. A wound is an injury that breaks through the skin. Sometimes, wounds need to be closed with sutures (also called stitches), or with a special tape or skin glue. This helps reduce bleeding and scarring, and they help the wound heal properly.

## HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR CHILD AT HOME

- + Your child should try to be careful with the wound. Try to help your child avoid hitting or bumping the wound.
- + Keep the wound clean and dry. Your child should not play contact sports, or go swimming, until the wound is healed.
- + If the wound is under your child's hair, it's OK to wash and dry their hair gently once you go home.
- + If the wound is in your child's mouth, avoid salty or spicy foods for a few days. If possible, help your child rinse out their mouth with warm water after eating.
- + Keep the wound covered for \_\_\_\_\_ days. Change the bandage every day. After this time, keep the bandage on when your child is playing or at school. When your child is resting at home, you can leave the wound uncovered.  
**TIP:** Make sure you wash your hands with soap and water before and after you change the bandage!
- + There will probably be a mark or scar, but it should become less obvious over months. Once the wound is healed, you can make the scar less visible by protecting it from the sun. Use clothing or sunscreen for this. You can also gently apply a moisturizer cream one or two times a day for 4-6 weeks. Ask your pharmacist for a good moisturizer cream.

### If your child has stitches:

- + Make sure your child doesn't pull or tug on the stitches, even if they are itchy.
- + See your doctor in \_\_\_\_\_ days to take out the stitches.

### If your child's wound is glued shut:

- + Keep the wound dry for at least 5 days.
- + The glue should peel off on its own in 5-14 days. Until then, make sure your child doesn't pick or scratch at the glue. Avoid tight clothes that can rub against the wound.

### If your child's wound is held together by tape (Steri-Strips):

- + The pieces of tape used to hold the wound together are called "Steri-strips".
- + After 1 day, the wound can be gently rinsed with soap and water, but don't scrub.
- + As the edges of the Steri-Strips come off, trim them with scissors. If they are still there after 7 days, you can take them off by soaking them in water.

## WHEN TO GET HELP

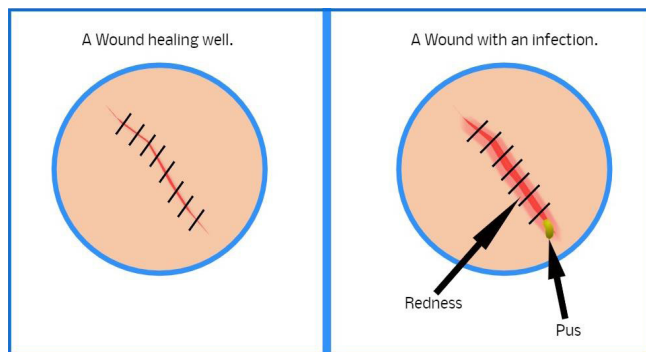
### Go to the nearest Emergency Department

if your child is experiencing any of the following:

- + They can't feel a touch below the wound.
- + If there is swelling below the wound.
- + If they start to bleed again, AND the bleeding continues after you put gentle pressure on it for 10 minutes.
- + If there are signs of infection in the wound.

#### Here are 6 signs of infection:

- The wound becomes red and swells up.
- The wound starts to hurt more.
- There is white, yellow or green fluid coming from the wound.
- The wound has red streaks going away from it.
- The wound smells bad.
- Your child gets a fever. A fever is a temperature above 38.0°C or 100.4° F.



## RELEVANT RESOURCES

- + Visit [www.aboutkidshealth.ca](http://www.aboutkidshealth.ca) to learn more about taking care of your child's wound.

## TO LEARN MORE ASK

- + Your family doctor.
- + HealthLinkBC - call 8-1-1 (7-1-1 for deaf or hard of hearing) or go online to [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca)

## RECOMMENDED FOLLOW UP

- Follow up with your primary care provider in \_\_\_ days.

Content and images used with permission from Island Health.

Find this information sheet on the BC Emergency Medicine Network website:

[www.bcemn.ca/clinical\\_resource/how-to-take-care-of-your-child's-wound-with-stitches-glue-or-tape](http://www.bcemn.ca/clinical_resource/how-to-take-care-of-your-child's-wound-with-stitches-glue-or-tape)