

How To Take Care Of Your Stitches, Staples, Or Steri-strips

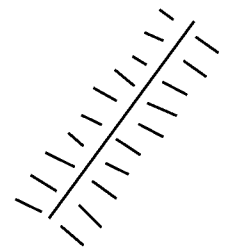


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Your stitches, staples or steri-strips will be in for a short time. They are to hold your skin together so it heals.

What to do:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before you touch your stitches, staples or steri-strips.
- Clean your stitches, staples, or steri-strips **only if your health care provider has told you to, or if they get dirty.** To clean them, wash them gently with soap and water. Pat them dry gently.
- Only use medicine or ointment ordered by your health care provider on your stitches, staples, or steri-strips. Don't put anything else on them.
- Cover your stitches, staples, or steri-strips with a bandaid or dressing **only** if your health care provider told you to.
- Wash your hands again after touching your stitches, staples or steri-strips.



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What special things do I need to know?

- **Do not** get your stitches wet or dirty.
- **Do not put** medicine or ointment on your stitches **unless** your health care provider tells you to.
- **Do not** take out your own stitches, or staples. Your steri-strips will fall off by them selves. Do not pick at them or at any scabs growing around them. You could get an infection.
- **Do not** miss your clinic appointment.
- If you have problems or questions call your case manager if you have one, or your clinic, or the Nurses Station of the unit where you were a patient.

Come to the Emergency Room if you have:

- **Fever** over 101° Fahrenheit (38° Celsius) or chills.
- **Redness or pain** around your stitches.
- Any **drainage** from your stitches.

