

Caring for your surgical wound is extremely important to prevent infections and complete the healing process. On the back of this guide there are warning signs and symptoms that may signal an infection within your wound.

## How to Apply a New Dressing



### Step 1:

Always wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer before touching your wound or dressing.



### Step 2:

Loosen the tape around the old dressing and remove. Gloves are not needed if your hands are clean.



### Step 3:

Leave the silver strip on your wound for 7 days, then remove.



### Step 4:

You should apply a clean dressing every other day until 24 hours after your staples are removed.

## How to Apply a Waterproof Dressing



If you do not have a waterproof dressing, then you may **not** take a shower until 24 hours after your staples/sutures are removed.

### Step 1:

Wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer, and remove your dressing.



### Step 2:

Fold a 4x4 gauze pad in half and place it over your wound.



### Step 3:

Apply the waterproof dressing, so it covers the whole wound and gauze dressing. The goal is to keep your wound completely dry while you shower.

After you have dried off from your shower, remove the waterproof dressing and gauze.



### Step 4:

Apply a clean dressing to your wound by following steps 1-4 under "How to Apply a New Dressing."

## Warning Signs and Symptoms That May Signal an Infection Within Your Wound



### Healthy: **Go!**

**What to look for:**

- No new drainage
- Dressing is dry
- Pain has not changed or is slowly improving

**Take action:**

1. Ice and elevate
2. Continue changing dressing as instructed
3. Remember: Always wash your hands before you change your dressing!



### Moderate: **Caution!**

**What to look for:**

- Increased redness, warmth or odor
- Increased drainage or opening of your wound
- Moderate pain while resting

**Take action:**

1. Ice and elevate
2. Change dressing after washing hands
3. Check wound daily
4. Call your surgeon to report any symptoms at: (314) 514-3500 or (314) 388-5550



### Severe: **Stop!**

**What to look for:**

- Fever above 101 °F
- Swelling of your legs or feet
- Pain that is not relieved by your current pain medicines
- Redness, warmth or opening of your wound
- Drainage with an odor
- Unable to walk or bear weight on leg

**Take action:**

1. Call your surgeon to schedule an appointment at (314) 514-3500 or (314) 388-5550

## Orthopedics



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