

Patient Information

## Children's Emergency Department

# Steri-Strips: parent-carer discharge information



This leaflet contains advice and information about what to expect when your child leaves hospital with steri-strips.

Steri-Strips, also known as butterfly stitches, are small strips which are applied to the skin to help pull the edges of your child's wound together. They are reinforcing strips, which run along the length of the wound and are coated with a hypoallergenic adhesive, which is gentle on the skin.

### **Nutrition**

Your child can eat and drink as normal.

### **Mobility**

Your child may start doing normal activities as soon as they feel well enough to do so.

### **Bathing**

Your child must not get the wound wet for 5 to 7 days. To remove the Steri-Strips, you need to soak them in water. This can be done in a bath without bubbles.

Once the steri-strips are wet the adhesive will come unstuck. If the steri-strips do not fall off by themselves, gently peel each strip when wet from the ends towards the wound. If you tug away from the wound, you may



## Patient Information

cause it to re-open. Make sure you pat the wound completely dry to stop infections.

### **Return to school/activity**

You will need to inform the school/college that you child has sustained an injury where they will have Steri-Strips in place for 5 to 7 days. The school/college will also need to be informed that they will need to refrain from certain activities while the Steri-Strips are in place to make sure the wound heals fully.

### **What medication can I give to my child/adolescent?**

Paracetamol and or Ibuprofen (if applicable) to be given for pain.

Paracetamol 4-6 hourly last given at.....

Ibuprofen 6-8 hourly last given at.....

### **Wound care**

The wound will be red, tender, and swollen after the Steri-Strips are applied. As the wound starts to heal in 2 to 3 days, this should ease. All wounds will leave a scar whether Steri-Strips, stitches or glue has been applied.

Initially the scar may be red or purple in colour but will fade to light pink or white or nearly invisible over time. It could take 6 months to fade.

To allow healing of your child's wound we advise that you:

- Do not allow your child to pick at the wound or the Steri-Strips
- Leave the wound uncovered and open to the air as this promotes healing. However, if your child picks at the wound, or it is in an area that is difficult to keep clean, you can use a dry dressing over it
- Don't pull anything off before it naturally comes away from the skin as this may re-open the wound and you may have to have it done again.

The steri-strips will generally peel away after a week.

## Patient Information

### Bleeding

Seek medical advice if:

- If the wound becomes swollen and/or red around the edges and the redness spreads to the surrounding skin or is hot to touch
- If the wound smells or there is pus (this is usually yellow or green in colour and may indicate an infection)
- Your child develops a fever after 48 hours of having the Steri-Strips applied
- If the steri-strips come off and the wound is open (gaping) or bleeding

### Other advice

Many things affect how a wound heals. Attention to good hygiene and a healthy, balanced diet will help the healing process. Any exposure to UV rays and susceptibility to thick scarring can affect the look of your child's healed wound.

The final scar may not settle for a few years after the injury. When going outdoors, it's important to use sun-block lotion. It is important to apply sunscreen often to the healed wound for up to 2 years. For healed wounds on the head, a hat should be worn to protect the area from the sun and UV rays.

**For further information contact the Paediatric Department on 024 7696 6934.**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 6934 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

#### Document History

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