

Orthopaedic Department

A patient's guide to Aquacel surgical dressing

How to care for your post-operative hip/knee joint replacement wound.

These pictures show how the dressing works



Knee picture 1

- **Dressing covering the wound**
- How your wound dressing may look after a few days
- **This does not need changing**



Knee picture 2

- **Dressing covering the wound**
- Dressing needs to be changed when fluid reaches the border

Your wound will leak into your dressing as in Picture 1, and then will dry up, this is normal. Your wound dressing should remain in place for at least seven days.

The dressing will only need to be changed if:

- The dressing will not stay in place or attach to your skin;
- It is not intact - that means the dressing is leaking onto your clothing or bed sheets.

Hints, tips and your questions answered

What kind of dressing have I been given?

After your operation, the incision made by the surgeon was closed and covered with an advanced AQUACEL surgical cover dressing. The dressing consists of two main components - AQUACEL dressing covered with a conformable, waterproof DuoDERM extra thin dressing.



Patient Information

Why have I been given this dressing?

AQUACEL surgical cover dressing is flexible, aiding mobility and enabling you to exercise more freely. Because it is waterproof and bacteria-proof it protects your incision from infection while healing, and it allows you to shower and bathe. It also absorbs any post-operative bleeding or oozing from the incision while it heals.

What should I expect from the dressing?

The release of blood or fluid from your incision immediately after your operation is completely normal. AQUACEL dressing absorbs this by gelling on contact, so the dressing may expand slightly. Some discolouration of the dressing is also normal.

Reasons you should contact the hospital for advice regarding your wound:

- The wound begins to ooze blood or any other fluid;
- The skin around the wound becomes red spreading outwards and is constantly hot;
- You experience unusual pain or odour;
- The wound dressing has moved and the wound is visible.

Changing your dressing

When should my dressing be changed?

AQUACEL Surgical is designed to stay in place for up to 14 days or more, subject to clinical assessment. If your dressing becomes saturated and/or leakage occurs before the scheduled dressing change, contact your practice nurse or the Fracture Clinic on 024 7696 6909 who will arrange an appointment for the dressing change to take place sooner.

Important reminder

For maximum effectiveness the dressing **must stay** in place.

Do not be tempted to remove the dressing before your hospital appointment.

Contact Information

If you are concerned about your wound, you can call us anytime on:

Ward 52: University Hospital Telephone 024 7696 7738

Cedar Ward: Rugby St Cross 01788 663876 or 01788 663183

Please refer to the advice given to you on discharge about the removal of your clips or sutures (stitches). The dressing will be removed approximately 14 days after your operation.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact the ward you were discharged from and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

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