

Instructions for Post-Operative Dressing Care

Therapist will change your dressing at your first appt. This is typically 2-3 days after surgery. Surgical wounds are closed with absorbable Monocryl suture and covered with steri-strips or black Nylon sutures. There will be gauze and padding over the incisions and the extremity wrapped with an ACE wrap. The surgical dressing should be changed by the therapist using *sterile* technique. This includes sterile field, sterile gloves, betadine or chlorhexidine skin cleanser and sterile supplies when redressing the wounds. Do NOT remove steri-strips. The new dressing should include dry gauze and ACE wrap. For a shoulder arthroscopy the portals may be redressed with band-aids. Before the new dressing is applied the wounds should be clean and dry. Please do not use tegaderm unless it was used at the time of surgery or if specifically stated on the orders. The exception to this is when tegaderm is used to cover a biceps tenodesis incision. The tegaderm applied in surgery may be removed by the therapist at first visit. A new tegaderm does not need to be applied.

The dressing will be changed for the second time at your second therapy visit. After the second visit and second dressing change patient is permitted to shower at home. Remove the ACE wrap before shower. The wounds should be covered with Press-N-Seal. If the wounds get wet, use a hair dryer to *completely dry* the area prior to covering with ACE wrap after the shower.

Once you are permitted to get the incisions wet, warm soapy water should *gently* rinse the surgical area. Do NOT scrub the area. Pat the area dry with a clean towel and keep free of lotions or creams. Do NOT soak in a pool, bath or hot tub until permitted by the surgeon's office. Please wear clean clothes following shower and be conscious of any pet hair or other contaminants near the surgical area.

Anytime the dressing is changed or examined, *please wash hands* prior with antibacterial soap. Do not apply any ointments or medications to the area.

Total knee replacements and total shoulder replacements

Dressing should be changed at first post op visit using *sterile* technique. Total joint surgical incisions are typically closed with skin staples. This includes sterile field, sterile gloves, betadine or chlorhexidine skin cleanser and sterile supplies when redressing the wounds. Patients are sent home from surgery with an extra dressing for the therapist to use for first dressing change. When staples are removed, they should be removed with a sterile staple remover.