



Suture and Staple Removal Addendum

Refer to: WACHS [Wound Management Policy](#)

Equipment required

Sterile dressing pack	Sterile metal, fine, non-toothed, serrated dressing forceps
Sodium Chloride 0.9%	Sterile stitch cutter or staple remover
PPE: gloves, safety glasses	Sterile adhesive dressing if required
Disposal receptacle	Sharps container

Prepare equipment and patient

- Perform **hand hygiene** and don/change PPE at all appropriate moments throughout procedure.
- Ensure to use an **aseptic technique** throughout procedure:
 1. Explain procedure to patient and confirm consent to proceed.
 2. Consider analgesia needs prior to procedure. If indicated and available, administer as per WACHS Medication Prescribing and Administration Policy
 3. Prepare equipment. Remove dressing if in place.
 4. Cleanse and dry wound using an aseptic technique.

Suture and Staple Removal

- If wound begins to dehisce after removal of alternate sutures or staples, then cease procedure and redress as appropriate. Inform Medical Officer/ Senior Clinician.
- Sutures/staples to be removed from healed wounds as directed by MO.
- Remove alternate sutures/staples first, even if full suture removal is ordered.

Suture (Interrupted) Removal

- Gently grasp the knot of the suture with forceps and raise it slightly.
- Place the curved tip of the suture cutter underneath the knot, as close to the skin as possible.
- Gently cut the suture and pull out with forceps.
- Ensure exposed suture material is not pulled through the wound.
- Place removed suture onto gauze.
- Inspect removed suture to ensure all material is removed.

Staple Removal

- Place both claws of the lower jaw. of the remover under the centre of the staple.
- Squeeze the handle to completely close the device, bend the staple, and pull the edges out of the skin.
- Gently move the staple away from the incision site, when both ends of the staple are visible.
- Relax pressure on handles to release staple either: onto gauze or into sharps container.

If wound edges remain approximated:

- Cleanse and dry incision line, apply appropriate dressing if required.
- Dispose of waste into appropriate containers.
- Remove PPE and perform hand hygiene.

Document suture/staple removal in patient health record.

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