



Accurate Clinic

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Lacerations with Foreign Bodies

You have been treated for a laceration (cut) and any foreign bodies in the wound(s) are believed to have been removed. "Foreign bodies" are materials that are not natural to the body and contaminate a wound. Common foreign bodies include gravel, glass fragments, bullets, clothing material and wood fragments.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to identify and remove *all* components of a foreign body and some parts may be retained in the wound. Retained foreign bodies can sometimes lead to wound infection or further injury so it is important that you follow up with a physician if you experience any inappropriate symptoms in the area of the wound.

If you were given a local anesthetic, it will wear off in about 2 hours. Until that time, you must be careful not to injure yourself because of decreased feeling to the area.

Return to Accurate Clinic or go to your physician or the nearest Emergency Room for suture (stitches or staples) removal. Sutures in the face should be removed in 3-5 days, all other sutures should be removed in 10-14 days unless otherwise advised by your physician.

Keep the wound clean and dry for the next 24 hours and avoid excessive moisture. You can wash the wound gently with soap and water, and then apply a dry bandage.

DO NOT soak your wound in water (i.e. doing dishes or swimming). You can shower, but be careful not to be too abrasive to your wound. Allow wound to dry before putting another bandage on.

Remove old dressings and apply a fresh dressing daily:

- If the dressing sticks to the wound, slightly moisten it with water. This will allow it to come off easier.
- To help remove a scab, soak it with hydrogen peroxide.
- Allow the area to dry thoroughly.
- Unless instructed to do otherwise, you should place a thin layer of antibiotic ointment over the wound. You can buy Polysporin (Triple Antibiotic), Bacitracin, or Neosporin over-the-counter. Neosporin can sometimes cause irritation to your skin. If this happens, stop using it and switch to another topical antibiotic.
- Apply a clean, dry bandage over the wound if necessary to protect the wound.

- Keep the affected area elevated for the next 24 hours to decrease swelling and pain. You may also want to apply ice to the area. By applying ice to the affected area, swelling and pain can be reduced. Place some ice cubes in a resealable (Ziploc) bag and add some water. Put a thin washcloth between the bag and the skin. Apply the ice bag to the area for at least 20 minutes. NEVER APPLY ICE DIRECTLY TO THE SKIN OR WOUND.

YOU SHOULD SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY, EITHER HERE OR AT THE NEAREST EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT, IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OF INFECTION OCCUR:

- Redness of the wound.
- Increasing pain. - Fever.
- Pus draining from the wound.
- Swelling around the wound site.