



ST VINCENT'S  
HOSPITAL  
MELBOURNE

# Dissolvable Suture Information



## What are dissolvable sutures (stitches)?

Dissolvable stitches are biodegradable threads used in wound closure. They gradually break down over several weeks, eliminating the need for manual removal.

## How long should I keep my wound dry after surgery?

During the first two weeks after your surgery, it's important to keep your wound dry to decrease risk of infection. Avoid getting the wound wet and do not soak in water at this stage.

## When can I get my hand wet?

After two weeks, the wound should be healed and formed into a scar. At this stage, you can gently clean the scar using mild soap and water, repeating this process a few times per day. Washing your scar helps to dissolve the stitches.

## When can I start massaging my scar?

Scar massage can be beneficial in softening scar tissue and helps to dissolve the stitches. After two weeks, when your wound is healed you can use a water-based, fragrance-free moisturiser on your stitches. Apply the moisturiser using a light to moderate pressure, but avoid discomfort. Aim for three times a day, this will help soften your scar and reduce sensitivity.

## What complications should I look out for?

It is always good to be on the lookout for signs of infection or complications. If you are concerned, please stop washing and moisturising your scar and contact your doctor or GP.

## Signs of infection or complications:

- Increased or spreading redness, swelling, warmth, or unusual discharge from the wound
- If the stitches do not hold the wound together

## Contact details

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