

Minor Surgery Patient Information Leaflet

Springfield Medical Practice

General information

Minor surgery is relatively painless and fairly quick, usually no more than 30 minutes. You may eat and drink as normal prior to the procedure. Minor operations at the Practice are carried out using local anaesthetic only. This is an injection (like that used by dentists) given around the site of the operation. If you have had a bad reaction to a local anaesthetic in the past it is important that you inform us. The local anaesthetic may sting initially whilst being injected but this quickly settles and the area around the site of the operation soon becomes numb. You should not be able to feel any pain during the procedure but may be aware of a sensation of pressure. If you do feel any pain please inform the doctor or nurse. Most of the minor surgery carried out at the Practice involves the removal of lesions from the skin. Once the lesion has been removed, the skin may be closed using a few sutures (stitches) – these will have to be removed at a time specified (usually 1-2 weeks). An alternative to sutures, for more superficial wounds, is to use electrical cautery to “heat seal” the wound. The doctor will explain to you whether your procedure is likely to require sutures before the procedure is carried out. The local anaesthetic lasts for approximately 2-3 hours. The wound may then start to become a little uncomfortable. If necessary, you can take paracetamol once you get home and continue to use as necessary. Do not use aspirin. Please avoid alcohol for 24 hours before and after your procedure. Sometimes, with your consent, photographs are taken of the lesion to be removed. A parent or legal guardian **must** accompany a child under the age of 16 years, to provide legal consent.

Information about the wound and its care

- The wound will be dressed after the operation – this dressing should be left in place for the length of time specified by the doctor or nurse and helps to protect the wound from rubbing or dirt. The wound may become swollen and bruised, this is normal – but if the area becomes very swollen or bruised seek advice.
- If the wound should bleed, raise the affected area and press the area for at least 15 minutes. If the bleeding does not settle, contact the Practice straight away.
- Keep the wound clean and dry.
- The wound may be uncomfortable for the first few days. If this discomfort doesn't settle or seems to be getting worse, please contact the Practice nurse.
- If the wound becomes very red or tender or starts to discharge pus or other fluid, please contact the Practice nurse; if you have sutures, do not wait until you are due to have the sutures removed.
- As your wound heals it may feel itchy, tingly and slightly lumpy – this is normal. Do not pull off any scabs/crusts as these protect your wound whilst it heals.
- Once the wound has fully healed and after any sutures have been removed, you can massage the scar with a moisturiser such as E45 to help reduce any swelling and encourage reduction and softening of the scar tissue.
- There may be some altered sensation around the wound/scar, though this often improves over a period of several weeks to months.
- All minor surgery will leave some scarring in the skin. The degree of this depends on the procedure you have had done and will also vary from person to person. Most scars will stretch over time and the scar tissue will be thinner (and weaker) than the surrounding normal skin. Very occasionally scars can thicken considerably and remain raised; this type of scar can be difficult to treat. If you have had sutures, the suture marks may sometimes remain partially visible.