

Wound closure with Dermabond glue

What is Dermabond?

Dermabond® skin adhesive is a glue that forms a light purple film on the skin that holds an open wound together. Dermabond will normally fall off after 5 to 10 days which is enough time for your wound to heal. The scar will be as good as, or in some cases, better than if stitches were used. It is normal for any scar to be red in colour initially, but this will fade over the next few months.

Directions for use

- A dressing is not normally required. However, if there is likelihood of your child rubbing the wound site, a clean and dry dressing should be left in place for a few days.
- Do not let your child rub, scratch or pick the Dermabond. This could result in loosening of the glue which could lead to the wound reopening.
- Keep the wound clean.
- Keep the wound dry for the first 24 hours. After this, the wound can get wet in the shower or bath, but you must pat the wound dry.
- Do not soak the wound in the bath and avoid swimming.

Signs of infection

Observe for signs of infection including:

- fever within 48 hours of the injury or wound
- redness
- swelling
- increase in pain
- excessive or persistent ooze
- pus or smelly discharge.

If you are concerned about possible signs of infection or have any other concerns take your child to your local doctor or emergency department.

Wound healing and scarring

Scars form as a normal part of healing whenever the skin is damaged. All cuts will heal with a scar, however, the scar will be less noticeable if good care is given to the wound when it is healing.

During the first 6 to 8 weeks after the injury, the scar will change from a thick, red raised scar to a thinner, paler, more flexible one. Scars can take up to 2 years to fully mature. The final appearance of the scar depends on several factors including the extent of the original wound, inherited skin qualities and how well the scar was looked after.



How to look after your scar

Scar massage

After the Dermabond has fallen off the wound, or around 2 to 4 weeks after the injury, scar massage can be performed. This should be done for 5 to 10 minutes, twice a day. Do not massage any scar that is open or looks infected.

For the first 2 to 4 weeks, massage should be done along the same direction as the laceration. The pressure applied should be enough to change the colour of the scar from pink to pale, but should not be so firm that it is painful.

After about 4 weeks, the scar can be massaged in all directions. Continue to massage daily until the scar is pale and thin.

Moisturising

Lotions such as Vitamin E cream, aloe vera, sorbolene or other un-fragranced products can be used to soften the scar and make massage easier.

Sun protection

It is very important to protect the scar from sun damage, which can permanently discolour the scar. You should always cover the scar with at least SPF 30 sunblock or zinc cream, wear clothing that covers the scar and stay in the shade.

Daily activity

It is important that your child avoids activities that will get the wound dirty.

Problem scars

A scar is a problem if it is painful or itchy, hard or raised, restricts movement or remains purple or red.

Risk factors for problem scars include certain skin types (especially dark, Mediterranean or Asian skin), previous problem scars, or post-operative wound complications such as poor healing (greater than 3 weeks) or infection.

You should contact your GP if you are concerned that your child's scar is not healing as expected.



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