

PAEDIATRIC NURSING PRACTICE MANUAL
SECTION 9

WOUND CARE

9.5 SUTURE LINE

9.5.1 SUTURE LINE CARE

Aims

1. To promote healing.
2. To minimise scarring.¹

Key points

1. This is a clean [aseptic technique](#).
2. This procedure should be undertaken whenever exudate and crusts appear on the suture line.

Equipment

- Dressing pack
- Cotton tip applicators
- Sterile swabbing solution (sodium chloride 0.9%^{2,3} is normally used to clean wounds)
- Disposable gloves
- Emollient ung
- Bag to dispose of used items

PROCEDURE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Using normal saline and cotton tip applicators, gently swab the suture line until clean.	Maintenance of fresh wound edges along the incision will encourage epithelialisation. ² Presence of necrotic tissue increases the risk of infection.
Dry gently using cotton tip applicators.	
Observe the wound for signs of infection.	
Apply thin layer of emollient to the suture line.	A moist wound environment will encourage epithelialisation. ² Apply sparingly.

References:

1. Small V. Management of cuts, abrasions and lacerations [Literature Review]. Nursing Standard.15(5):41-44; 2000.
2. Hom DB. Incision Placement [Expert opinion]. eMedicine Specialties: Otolaryngology and Facial Plastic Surgery: Wound Healing And Care 2005. Available from: <http://www.emedicine.com/ent/topic34.htm>. Accessed: 5 July 2005
3. Brown P. Surgical wounds and radiation burns. In: Quick reference to wound care Ch.12 2nd ed. Sudbury MA: Jones and Bartlett; 2005.