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Introduction

This leaflet provides information on how to care for your wound after your surgery with Mr. Ahmad Hariri. These are general guidelines, and Mr. Hariri or a member of his team may give you specific instructions.

Your type of wound closure:

- **Dissolvable stitches and skin glue:** Most common method.
- **Non-dissolvable stitches:** These need to be removed.

Follow the instructions below specific to your wound closure type.

Immediate and Short-Term Care (Days 1-14) – For Patients with Dissolvable Stitches and Skin Glue

Aspect of Care	Instructions
Dressings	Usually <i>no</i> dressing over the skin glue. The glue is a waterproof barrier. If you <i>do</i> have a dressing, keep it dry and in place for 24-48 hours, unless instructed otherwise.
Pain Relief	Over-the-counter pain relievers like paracetamol (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen are usually sufficient. Follow dosage instructions. Contact your GP or surgical team if needed.
Rest	Rest and avoid strenuous activity for the first 24-48 hours. Mr. Hariri or his team will advise on activity restrictions.
Showering /Bathing	<i>Keep wound completely dry for the first 24 hours.</i> After this, you can shower, but avoid directing the spray directly onto the wound. Pat dry. <i>No baths, swimming, or hot tubs until Mr. Hariri says it's safe</i> (usually after the glue has come off).
Skin Glue Care	The glue will flake off on its own over 7-14 days. <i>Do not pick or peel.</i> Avoid lotions, creams, or ointments directly on the glue. It's normal for the wound to look a little red and puckered.
Cleaning	Gently clean the area <i>around</i> the wound with mild soap and water after 24 hours. Avoid harsh soaps, alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide directly on the wound. Rinse and pat dry.
Activities	Gradually increase activity, but avoid strenuous activities, heavy lifting, or anything that strains the wound for the first few weeks. Mr. Hariri will give specific advice.
What not to Apply	Do not apply lotions, creams, powders, or ointments.

Immediate and Short-Term Care (Days 1-14) – For Patients with Non-Dissolvable Stitches

Aspect of Care	Instructions
Dressings	Keep the dressing clean and dry. Change as directed by Mr. Hariri or the nurse. Use non-stick dressings.
Pain Relief	Over-the-counter pain relievers like paracetamol (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen are usually sufficient. Follow dosage instructions. Contact your GP or surgical team if needed. <i>Do not take aspirin unless specifically instructed.</i>
Rest	Rest and avoid strenuous activity for the first 24-48 hours. Mr. Hariri or his team will advise on activity restrictions.
Showering/ Bathing	Keep the wound and dressing dry. You may be able to shower with a waterproof dressing, depending on the wound location and Mr. Hariri's instructions. <i>No baths, swimming, or hot tubs until stitches are removed and Mr. Hariri says it's safe.</i>
Cleaning	Follow instructions from Mr. Hariri or the nurse. You may be told to clean around the stitches with mild soap and water, or to keep the area completely dry. Avoid harsh soaps, alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide.
Stitch Removal	Stitches will be removed by a nurse or doctor. You will have an appointment for this. <i>Do not remove them yourself.</i> Typically removed 7-10 days after surgery, but this can vary.
Activities	Gradually increase activity, but avoid strenuous activities, heavy lifting, or anything that strains the wound until <i>after</i> stitches are removed and you are cleared by Mr. Hariri.
What not to Apply	Do not apply lotions, creams, powders, or ointments.

Longer-Term Wound Care and Scar Management (After 2 Weeks - For All Patients)

- **Wound Healing:** Once any skin glue has come off or stitches have been removed, and the wound is closed, continue caring for the area. The healing process continues for many weeks and months.
- **Moisturizing:** Once the wound is fully closed (no scabs or open areas), you can start applying a gentle, fragrance-free moisturizer. This helps to keep the skin hydrated and can improve scar appearance. Good options include:
 - Bio-Oil
 - Vitamin E oil
 - Cocoa butter
 - Shea butter
 - Simple, unperfumed moisturizers (like E45 or aqueous cream)
- **Massage:** Gentle massage of the scar can help to soften it and improve its appearance. Start massaging *about two weeks after the glue has come off or stitches have been removed*, once the wound is fully closed and there's no tenderness. Use a small amount of moisturizer and gently massage in a circular motion for 5-10 minutes, 2-3 times a day.
- **Sun Protection:** Protect the scar from direct sunlight for at least 6-12 months. Use a high-SPF sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) on the scar whenever it's exposed, or cover it with clothing.
- **Scar Appearance:** Scars are often red and slightly raised initially. Over time (several months to a year), the scar will typically fade, flatten, and become paler.
- **Silicone:** If your scar becomes raised, you can consider using silicone gel sheets or silicone gel, available from pharmacies.

Signs of Complications and When to Seek Help (For All Patients)

- **When to Contact Us:** Contact Mr. Hariri's office or seek medical attention immediately if you experience any of the following:
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 - **Increased Pain:** Pain that is getting worse or severe pain not controlled by pain relievers.
 - **Redness:** Increasing redness around the wound, especially if it spreads or is accompanied by warmth or swelling.
 - **Swelling:** Significant swelling around the wound.
 - **Discharge:** Any pus, thick fluid, or foul-smelling discharge from the wound.
 - **Fever:** A temperature of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher.
 - **Wound Opening:** If the edges of the wound start to separate.
 - **Bleeding:** Bleeding from the wound that is difficult to stop.
 - **Numbness or Tingling:** New or worsening numbness or tingling.
 - **Systemic symptoms:** Generally feeling unwell, nausea, vomiting.
 - **Red Streaks:** Red streaks extending away from the wound.
- **Emergency Situations:** If you experience difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe bleeding, or any other serious symptoms, call emergency services (999 in the UK) immediately.
- **Follow-Up Appointments:** You will be given a follow-up appointment. It's important to attend this appointment.