



Wound care after you leave hospital

St Vincent's Private Hospital Melbourne is committed to providing excellence in patient care. Integral to this is educating patients on how to identify the early signs of post-operative wound infections which may appear after you have left hospital.

WOUND HEALING FOLLOWING SURGERY:

Most surgical wounds heal without any problems or delay. Sometimes infections can occur. They can be minor, resulting in temporary discomfort and require little or no intervention. Others may require medical treatment. If you are concerned about your wound, please seek advice from your GP or surgeon.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR:

The signs and symptoms of a wound infection may include some or all of the following:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Increased pain or tenderness at the operation site
- Wound and surrounding skin feeling warmer to touch than your normal body temperature
- Discharge or ooze that is NOT clear or straw coloured (clear or straw coloured ooze is normal during the healing process)
- Excessive discharge or ooze
- Smelly odour coming from the operation site
- Fever or sweats.

NORMAL HEALING	SIGNS OF INFECTION		
			
<p>Normal wound healing: Approximately 6 weeks after surgery</p>	<p>Signs of infection: Redness, discharge, increased temperature of skin at the wound site, swelling and pain.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Your wound may have stitches or clips which may need removing as per surgeon's instructions or a non-visible stitch under the skin, which will dissolve itself. All are normal methods of wound closure following a surgical procedure.</i></p>		

PLEASE NOTE: Your surgeon may provide you with specific instructions related to your individual case. It is important that you follow these instructions. If you have any concerns, it is advised that you contact your surgeon or G.P. If you are unable to do this then please call nursing staff on your treating hospital ward for assistance.