

# Care of a minor skin wound over your shinbone (pre-tibial laceration)

Emergency Department

Information for Patients

Produced: April 2021

Review: April 2024

Leaflet number: 1174 Version: 1

## What is a pre-tibial laceration?

Pre-tibial laceration is the name given to a skin wound over the shin. The skin is very fragile here and the blood supply may be poor. This means they take longer to heal.

Steristrips (or paper stitches) are normally used rather than stitches (sutures) as these are the best way to close the skin without causing more damage to the skin.

## How do I care for my wound?

You can help your wound to heal by following the instructions below.

For the first 2 days:

- take painkillers as needed such as paracetamol. If you are taking other medicines from your doctor, please talk to a pharmacist before taking any over-the-counter medicines.
- avoid standing up for long periods, such as when cooking, washing dishes or ironing.
- when resting, keep your injured leg raised so that your ankle is higher than your hips, to try and reduce swelling.
- try and avoid direct pressure to the heel of your injured leg to reduce the risk of developing a pressure sore.
- while you are resting move your toes, ankle and knee every hour for at least 1 minute. This will encourage blood circulation to your leg and reduce the risk of developing a blood clot in your leg (thrombosis).

**Health information and support is available at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit [www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk) for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals  
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact [InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk](mailto:InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk)

## Advice to follow until your wound has healed

Dressings are usually left in place for around 5 days to allow the wound to start healing without being disturbed.

Follow the advice below until your wound has healed:

- At night when in bed, keep your leg raised higher than your hips to reduce swelling.
- Keep your wound dry.
- Report any signs of infection to the team looking after your dressing or your GP.  
Signs of an infection include:
  - increased redness
  - swelling
  - pain
  - heat
  - pus forming in or around wound
  - smelly fluid oozing from wound
- Eating a well balanced diet can help with healing. The Eatwell Guide on the NHS website can be viewed here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>
- If you are diabetic you may need to monitor your blood sugar more closely whilst you are resting and manage this as needed.
- Stop smoking as smoking can delay your wound from healing. Smoking prevents wounds from receiving enough oxygen which is needed for healing. When you stop, the benefits can happen within a few days.
- If your wound starts to bleed heavily apply pressure over the dressing and go to the Emergency Department.

## Arrangements for your first dressing change

We have made an appointment for the district nurse to visit you on:

..... for a dressing check and change.

If you need any help from the district nurse before this appointment or your appointment is missed, please call 0300 300 7777.

Please book an appointment with your practice nurse on:

..... for a dressing check and change.

Please attend the Plastics, Burns and Dressing Clinic at Level 3,  
Balmoral Building, Leicester Royal Infirmary on:

..... for a dressing check and change.

## Contact details

Minor Injuries Unit, Emergency Department, Leicester Royal Infirmary

Switchboard Tel: 0300 303 1573 (ext 0052 or 0054).

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Leicester's Hospitals is a research active trust so you may find research happening on your ward or in your clinic. To find out about the benefits of research and become involved yourself, speak to your clinician or nurse, call 0116 258 8351 or visit [www.leicestersresearch.nhs.uk/patient-and-public-involvement](http://www.leicestersresearch.nhs.uk/patient-and-public-involvement)