

Circumcision Post-Operative Instructions

Houston Methodist Urology Associates - Baytown

Clinic: 832-556-6046 | For routine questions, send a MyChart message | Post-op visit: usually about 1 month

Call the clinic first for mild oozing, dressing questions, mild skin separation, sensitivity, or questions about how the incision looks. Use the ER for heavy bleeding, inability to urinate, or a tight dressing with color change, coldness, numbness, or severe swelling.

WHAT IS NORMAL

- Mild oozing, spotting, or a few drops of blood around the incision
- Swelling or bruising of the penis
- Tenderness, soreness, or burning with urination for a short time
- Sensitivity of the head of the penis after the foreskin is removed
- Small amount of clear, yellow, or blood-tinged drainage
- Stitches that look irritated as they dissolve
- Dressing feels bulky, loosens, or falls off on its own
- Using loose gauze in underwear to protect clothing

CALL CLINIC / MYCHART

- Questions about the dressing or removing it at home
- Mild oozing or spotting that worries you
- A small area of the incision looks slightly open
- Sensitivity, irritation, or rubbing on clothing
- Mild redness or drainage without severe pain or fever
- Pain that is not improving but is not severe
- Questions about stitches, ointment, showering, or activity
- Anything that does not seem right but does not feel like an emergency

GO TO THE ER

- Unable to urinate
- Bleeding that does not stop after 10 minutes of steady pressure
- Blood soaking through gauze or underwear repeatedly
- Dressing feels too tight AND the head of the penis is blue, purple, very pale, cold, or numb
- Rapidly worsening swelling or severe pain
- Fever over 101.5 F
- Pus/foul drainage with worsening redness and pain
- Incision opens widely

If you are unsure which category you are in, call the clinic first or send a MyChart message. If the problem feels urgent or dangerous, go to the ER.

Circumcision: Dressing and Home Care

Clinic: 832-556-6046 | Use MyChart for routine questions | Follow-up usually about 1 month

Your dressing

At the end of surgery, the penis was wrapped in a layered protective dressing using bacitracin ointment, Xeroform gauze, Kerlix gauze, and Coban wrap.

The dressing is meant to be snug, but not tight. It may feel bulky. Sometimes it loosens or falls off on its own. Other times, it may stick slightly to the ointment, dried blood, or stitches, so it should be removed gently.

If the dressing falls off

This is usually okay. Do not tightly rewrap the penis. After the dressing is off, use a small amount of bacitracin, Vaseline, or Aquaphor around the incision. You may place loose gauze in the underwear to protect clothing.

If the dressing is still on

Your surgeon may remove it in clinic the next day. If your surgery was on a Friday or you were told to remove it at home, gently unwrap it the next day.

Do not pull hard if it feels stuck. You may take a warm shower and let water run over the dressing to loosen it, then gently unwrap it. Do not cut close to the skin unless you can clearly see what you are cutting.

Wound care

After the dressing is off, gently wash with soap and water in the shower. Do not scrub. Pat dry. Apply bacitracin, Vaseline, or Aquaphor 2-3 times per day. Use loose gauze as needed to protect clothing.

Mild oozing is common

Mild oozing or spotting from the circumcision line is common, especially during the first few days or after activity. Use clean gauze as needed. Call the clinic first if you are unsure whether the amount is normal.

Activity

Walk and do light activity as tolerated. Avoid heavy lifting, strenuous exercise, biking, running, or rough activity for about 1-2 weeks, or until your surgeon clears you.

Avoid sexual activity, masturbation, or direct stimulation until the incision is healed, usually about 4-6 weeks. Erections can happen naturally, but sexual activity can pull on stitches and cause bleeding or skin separation.

Bathing

You may shower after the dressing is removed, usually the day after surgery. Avoid baths, pools, hot tubs, or soaking the incision until the incision is well healed, usually about 2 weeks or until cleared by your doctor.

Pain control

Use Tylenol/acetaminophen as directed. Ibuprofen/Advil/Motrin may be used only if your surgeon says it is safe for you. Do not use ibuprofen if you were told to avoid it because of kidney disease, blood thinners, stomach ulcers, or another medical reason. Use prescription pain medicine only if needed and only as directed.

Call the clinic or send a MyChart message for routine questions. Go to the ER for the emergency warning signs listed on page 1. These are general instructions. Follow any specific instructions given by your surgeon or care team.