

Pediatric Orthopedic External Fixator Pin Site Care

External fixators are used to lengthen the bone and to stabilize fractures. They are held in place with small pins. The pin sites need to be checked daily as there is a small risk for infection. Your nurse will show you how to care for your pin site before you go home. Please follow these instructions for care at home:

1. Remove any dressings around the pin sites.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Assess the pin sites for drainage, redness or crusts.

Pin sites that have crusts around them should be soaked with sterile saline or half strength hydrogen peroxide on a sterile cotton swab. After the site is cleaned, if there is no redness or drainage, the site should be left open to the air.

Pin sites that are draining or have an area of redness around them should have a dry dressing applied.

- Clean pin with half strength hydrogen peroxide or sterile saline on a sterile cotton swab.
- Allow to air dry.
- Apply Biopatch® around the pin with the blue side up.
- Apply Kerlix™ gauze around pin.

Pin sites that are sealed and are not draining or red should be left open to the air.

4. If your child has increased pain or redness greater than a quarter in size around the pin site, pus, fever or is more tired, please call the clinic. Your child may need to come for a clinic visit and may be prescribed antibiotics.
5. Your child may take a shower 10 days after the surgery.
6. Swimming is allowed 3 weeks after the surgery **only** in chlorinated pools. No swimming in lakes, rivers or ponds while the fixator is in place.

Call the Pediatric Specialty Clinics if you have any questions:
(608) 263-6420, option 1

For **after hours, weekends and holidays**, you will be connected to the paging system.