Vascular Surgery Groin Incision Care

You have an incision in your groin from vascular surgery. Your incision is usually closed with stitches or staples. You will leave the hospital before it fully heals. Clean your groin incision every day.

Cleaning Your Incision

1. **Clean the wound and groin.** Gently clean the wound with mild soap and water. Remove any dried drainage. **Do not** scrub the incision. Rinse off all the soap.
2. **Pat the incision dry with a towel.** Completely dry the groin. **Do not** use any lotions, alcohols, powders, or oils on your incision.
3. **Cover the wound with dry gauze and paper tape. Change as needed if soiled or loose.**

Bathing

You may get the incision wet in the shower. **Do not** swim or soak in a bathtub or hot tub.

The groin area is where the legs meet the belly. The skin in that area folds over to make a crease. Moisture in that crease can lead to an infection. Wash and dry the groin daily to avoid an infection.

Signs of Infection

Look at your wound every day. Call your doctor if you notice any of these signs of infection:

- Increased redness or warmth at the incision site.
- Red streaks that start at the stitches or staples.
- New foul-smelling, cloudy, yellow or green drainage or bleeding from your wound.
- Bulging or increased swelling at incision site.
- Fever over 101.5° F (38.5° C) for two readings taken by mouth 4 hours apart.
- Sudden increase in pain at the wound that is not relieved by your pain medicine.

Who to Call

If you have questions, please contact your provider through MyChart or call your provider listed in your After Visit Summary or After Hospital Care Plan.

For a list of UW Health Clinics, please visit www.uwhealth.org/.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 9/2024. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7348.