

Post Operative Wound Care

- **Keep theatre dressing intact for 24 hours.** This is to encourage clotting and protect fresh wound from infection.
 - Pad up with additional dressings on top of theatre dressing if there is a lot of strikethrough.
- **Strip down wound 2 days post op.**
 - If dry and intact, leave exposed and document on care plan.
 - If minimal serous/haemoserous oozing, cover with tegaderm/mepore and reassess daily.

Wound assessment:

- Remove all dressings
- [Assess wound](#) size, tissue type of wound bed, exudate levels and the skin around the wound
- Swab wound if any signs of infection (heat, redness, purulent discharge, increasing exudates or odour, increasing pain).
- [Dress wound appropriately](#) using [ANTT technique](#) and document on Formal Wound Assessment chart (TRAK).
- For complex wounds, you can refer to Tissue Viability Nurse for guidance.
 - <http://intranet.lothian.scot.nhs.uk/Directory/TissueViability/Pages/TissueViability.aspx>

Clip removal

- For most wounds, clips are removed at 10-14 days but you must confirm with surgeons before doing so.
- Remove every second clip initially and monitor for wound “unzipping” (dehiscing).
 - If no dehiscence, continue to remove all clips using the same technique.
 - If wound starts to open up, alert medical team and seek advice before continuing.
- If wound has dehisced then you should assess wound as above, apply appropriate dressing and document on wound care chart.
- Document clip removal on care plan.
- There may be times where there is evidence of infection or a collection of fluid behind the wound. In this case, surgeons may instruct you to remove a few clips from the affected area to drain exudate. You should do this, then assess and dress as above.

Wound Managers

- If a wound has very high output, it may be appropriate to apply a wound manager. This is an adhesive bag, much like a stoma bag, that can be applied over the wound. When output has sufficiently reduced, it is appropriate to remove this and dress the wound.