

Removing your stitches:

Important notice! Most patients will now have dissolvable stitches and the following instructions will NOT apply to them.

This guide is only for those patients who have the nylon stitching externally.

If you have a suture that needs to be removed - we have added the following instructions for removing your own. It is 'very simple', and does not require a doctor's visit unless you prefer one. It is a good idea to have a follow-up visit to your physician following any surgery. Please read through this entire sheet before beginning.

When to remove:

8 and 10 days following your reversal

What to remove:

The stitch is one strand of nylon thread, approximately 5-6 inches in length. It is knotted on each side of your incision.

What you need:

- Small scissors or fingernail clippers that have been cleaned with hot water, antibacterial soap, and alcohol.
- Clean hands
- Warm wet wash rag or hand towel.
- Someone to help you if you prefer (many people have had their husbands or older children do this, others have done this on their own).
- Clean dressing to apply after removal.

What to do:

- Choose one of the knots, either left or right side, it does not matter which
- Clip the knot off that ONE side completely
- Grab the other knot with the tweezers or fingers, and *slowly / gently* pull out to the side. It will slide out in one long strand.
- Apply new clean/dry dressing

Time needed:

From start to finish, less than 5 minutes.

Tips:

Make sure you clip the knot entirely (fingernail clippers may work best for this) and then pull on the OTHER knot\

Do not try to pull the still knotted end through your skin!

If you have any scabbing or crusting around the knots, place a warm wet wash cloth on it for couple of minutes to loosen the scab and wipe it away.

Use tweezers to gently lift the knot if it necessary, before clipping it off. This is especially helpful if you have a larger abdomen.

Lie flat - this helps flatter the abdomen so you or your assistant can get to the stitch/knot more easily.

Finally, be sure to clip the entire knot, and only pull from the OPPOSITE end.

Notes:

You can very easily do this yourself, or have your husband do it. Some patients have even had their child remove their stitch. A doctor's visit following any surgery is a wise idea, but it is not necessary to pay someone to remove your stitch.

You should not feel any 'pain', though there may be some mild stinging (possibly from pulling too fast), or a slight tingling sensation.

Soreness around your incision site can be expected to worsen as your time to remove the stitch approaches. This is caused by the skin tightening and pulling on the suture as it heals. Once the stitch is removed the soreness (especially when moving) will almost instantly subside.

Most people wait until day 10 to remove the suture, but you can remove it as early as day 8. Please do not remove it sooner. Also, leaving it in too long can cause it to become embedded, and more difficult or painful to remove. So please try to stick to the schedule.

Occasionally for some patients, especially those with extra weight, there may appear a small section (near the end of one side of the incision that does not appear to be closed or healing as fast as the rest. This is normal, and will heal just fine even after you remove your stitches. You can use a Band-Aid over it (most common), or an over the counter 'stitch' tape (ask your pharmacist). It will heal in a few days, and is nothing to be concerned about.

There is no reason to be concerned by the type of suturing that is done. It is intended to look that way so you will not have an 'external' scar (the rope-like scars that you often find after a abdominal surgery). Instead, the scar will heal inward, and in a few months time, you will barely even notice where it is. We don't usually get that type of suturing (unless it is with a plastic surgeon), but everyone is delighted at the outcome. It does not affect your reversal or any future pregnancy in anyway.

If you have any questions or problems, please fee free to call Dr. Levi during the consultation hours4-8 pm central time @ 011-52-899-132-2614

If you have any questions, please email!! Thank you!

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