General Incision Care

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after changing your bandage.
- Keep the bandage clean and dry. Replace a wet or soiled bandage with a new one.
- Change the dressing every 2-3 days, or as instructed. When the incision is no longer draining, you can leave it uncovered.
- Staples or stitches will be removed 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- Thin medical tape (steri-strips) may be present. Keep the tape clean and dry. They may fall off on their own.
- Surgical site infection may develop within 30 days, but is most common in 5-10 days after surgery. If there are any signs or symptoms of infection call your doctor’s office immediately!

Orthopedic Surgery Incision Care

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PLANETREE — PATIENT-CENTERED CARE IN A HEALING ENVIRONMENT
- Edges of the incision are well-approximated—there are no gaps or openings.
- There is little to no drainage. Any drainage is clear/yellow or bloody.
- There is no warmth or odor to the incision. Mild redness may be seen and is normal.
- The area around the incision may have some bruising, but the skin is intact. There are no blisters or peeling of the skin.
- This incision is healing properly. Keep doing what you’re doing, and check it daily.

- Edges of the incision may have some gaps or openings
- There is a moderate amount of blood or pus coming from the incision. There may be an odor.
- There is moderate redness on or around the incision. There may be warmth, swelling and increased tenderness.
- The skin around the incision may not be intact. You may see blisters or peeling of the skin around the incision.
- You may or may not have a fever or chills.
- Call your doctor’s office for instructions about this incision.

- The incision edges may have come apart and it is open.
- The drainage may be significant and is putrid.
- There may be heat, redness, swelling and an odor to the wound.
- There may be blistering or peeling around the incision.
- You may experience fever (above 101°F), chills, body aches and increased pain and stiffness.
- Call your doctor’s office immediately about this incision.