

# Caring for Your Child's Chest Wound



Get ready to clean the wound.



Clean the wound.



Cover the wound with sterile gauze.

1. Wash your hands.
2. Get the supplies that have been provided in the dressing pack and have them ready.
3. Remove your child's dressing and check the wound for signs of infection. Look for:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Drainage
- Wound edges coming apart
- Fever above 38° C.

Call the nurse practitioner at 604-875-2345 local 8968 if you notice any of these signs of infection

4. After handling the old dressing, wash your hands again

## For chest incisions:

5. Pick up the 2x2 gauze by the edges.
6. Wet the sterile gauze with normal saline for babies and young infants or gentle soap and water for toddlers and older children.
7. Holding the gauze, clean the incision by wiping it **once** from top to the bottom.
8. Discard the gauze.
9. Repeat steps 5-8 and clean to the right of the incision.
10. Repeat steps 5-8 and clean to the left of the incision.
11. Gently and thoroughly pat dry.

## For old chest tube sites:

12. Repeat steps 5-6 and clean wound by beginning in the center and working outward in a circle **once**. Then discard the gauze.
13. Gently and thoroughly pat dry.

## Within 10 days of surgery:

14. For babies and young children who may drool or spill food on the wound, cover the wound with a dry 4x4 gauze and secure with tape for 10 days.
15. Keep the incision dry. Sponge bath or shower your child with his or her back towards the water.

## After 10 days after surgery:

16. A tub bath, with water filled below the chest, may be given to your child if no signs of infection are present. The time when the incision can be completely submersed under water is when the wound is well healed, fully closed, and there are no signs of infection present



## Have questions?

Contact a Nurse Practitioner for any questions or concerns (604) 875-2345 ext. 8968. **It's good to ask!**

*Developed by the health care professionals of the Department of Cardiology with assistance from the Patient Experience Department  
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