

Michigan
COMMUNITY INTEGRATED PARAMEDICINE
Procedure
SUTURE REMOVAL

Initial Date November 13, 2020

Revised Date:

Section 11-35

This protocol is for trained CIP Paramedics only. If during assessment, procedure, or treatment the patient is found to have a medical emergency in need of hospital treatment, the CIP visit will be suspended, and local MCA protocols utilized.

Purpose: To provide guidelines for CIP paramedics to safely remove sutures and/or staples as approved by the MCA.

Aliases: Stitches, staples

- I. Indications
 - a. Request from a clinician to remove a known type of suture
- II. Contraindications
 - a. Signs of wound complications or infection
- III. Equipment
 - a. Forceps
 - b. Suture scissors
 - c. Staple remover
 - d. Sterile gauze
 - e. Sterile 0.9% sodium chloride solution
 - f. Sterile wound strips
- IV. Procedure
 - a. Plain suture removal (optional)
 - i. Gently grasp the knot or the tail with forceps and raise it slightly
 - ii. Place the curved tip of the suture scissors directly under the knot or on the side, close to the skin
 - iii. Gently cut the suture and pull it out with the forceps
 - iv. Make sure all suture material is removed and placed on clean gauze
 - v. Remove alternate sutures
 - vi. Assess the wound for dehiscence (edges of the wound do not meet)
 1. Absence of dehiscence
 - a. Remove remaining sutures
 - b. Apply sterile wound strips to prevent dehiscence
 2. Presence of dehiscence
 - a. Do not continue to remove sutures
 - b. Cover wound with sterile gauze saturated with sterile 0.9% sodium chloride solution
 - c. Contact physician **see CIP Medical Direction protocol**
 - b. Staple removal (optional)
 - i. Place the lower jaw of the remover under a staple
 - ii. Squeeze the handles completely to close the device bending the staple in the middle and pulling the edges of the staple out of the skin
 - iii. Gently move the staple away from the incision site when both ends are visible
 - iv. Hold the staple remover over a sharps container, relax pressure on the handles, let the staple drop into the sharps container

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- v. Remove alternate staples
- vi. Assess the wound for dehiscence (edges of the wound do not meet)
 - 1. Absence of dehiscence
 - a. Remove remaining staples
 - b. Apply sterile wound strips to prevent dehiscence
 - 2. Presence of dehiscence
 - a. Do not continue to remove staples
 - b. Cover wound with sterile gauze saturated with sterile 0.9% sodium chloride solution
 - c. Contact physician **see CIP Medical Direction protocol**
- V. Documentation **see CIP Documentation protocol**
 - a. Additionally:
 - i. Date and time of removal
 - ii. Number of sutures or staples removed
 - iii. Dressings or adhesive wound strips applies
 - iv. Appearance of the incision