

Staple Removal

Female1: Its time for the Renee and Wendy show.

Female2: Hi, Wendy. We're going to remove staples today. So what we need to do is we need to think about patient healing and what are the patient factors that contribute to healing and what might delay healing. Because you might make some decisions that perhaps you're not feeling comfortable about removing staples. So in this case the patient has all positive factors. They're eating and drinking well. The staples have been in for approximately seven days. And we have an order from the prescriber to go ahead and do that. I've informed the patient. I've checked their I.D. The patient is ready for us to proceed.

F1: So do you start at one side or the other or do you take alternates out or what would be your plan?

F2: That's really the nurse's discretion to decide. But definitely taking out alternate ones is a good idea. Because if the wound starts to dehiscence then you can stop, put on steri-strips and then call the prescriber and let them know what's going on. So the staple remover tool is quite clever, actually. It's quite straightforward once you have a look at your equipment. You open up the jaw, slide the staple underneath, there's a little notch on your staple remover and you simply squeeze and lift it up on either edge. And then we're just going to do [remove] alternates. And as I'm doing this I'm seeing how the patient is tolerating the procedure. Patients often ask 'does it hurt to take staples out'. I always tell them if they've ever had sutures, staples come out way easier.

F1: So what happens if those are really crusted in? Do you clean it before?

F2: Definitely you could clean it before. Some sources tell you to [always] clean, but the critical thinking point would be that because these staples have been in for seven days this thing is covered with normal flora and it's been exposed to air for three to four to five days. So it's okay if you don't as well. But removing the crust might make that more comfortable or perhaps not. And now it's time to make a decision whether or not I need to put steri-strips on. And this wound is well approximated. It's healing. It's not red. And so I'm going to make a decision that it doesn't need steri-strips.