

All stitches must be removed by the surgeon, unless otherwise ordered. Strapping should be prepared by the nurse, ready to be placed across the abdomen, to assist in supporting the wound after the removal of the stitches. This strapping is usually applied by the nurse to save the surgeon's time. It is applied a few hours before he is expected to arrive for the purpose of removing the stitches. Adhesive plaster, of any kind that will "stick," will answer the purpose. It should be cut narrow at its centre, the part intended to go over the wound, in order that the air may not be kept from the wound, or the stitches be hidden so as to make it difficult to remove them. The wound should be protected by a strip of gauze beneath the plaster.

If the case has pursued an uneventful course the bowels should be moved upon the fourth day. The surgeon should be reminded of this fact by the nurse in charge, so that she may obtain her orders. After the bowels have been moved the patient is then placed upon a more liberal diet, and this diet is gradually added to until full diet is reached, about the sixth or seventh day after operation.

The later dressing of wounds must be carefully attended to. Wounds will not heal if "pussy" dressings are allowed to remain in contact with them. After a little inflammation in a portion of the wound it unites by second intention. This process will be very much facilitated by a washing and cleansing of the part and the frequent application of fresh dressings. Sometimes a stitch-hole abscess forms and empties itself, and the healing of the cavity will be very much hastened by the injection of a solution of peroxide of hydrogen, equal parts with water, or a solution of warm boracic acid, ten grains to the ounce. The peroxide of hydrogen has one advantage, namely, that it creates a formation of gas, and on this account points out the ramification of any particular sinus.

Patients should not be allowed to sit up until the surgeon in charge has granted his permission. Belts, made of different patterns, are often worn for some months after the abdomen has been opened, and it is advisable for the nurse to ask the surgeon what his wishes are in this respect. He may have a preference for a certain type of belt, or he may discountenance their use.