

Taping after cleft lip surgery

Your child has stitches that were placed during surgery.

- The stitches on the red part of the lip and inside the lip will dissolve on their own.
- The stitches on the skin of the lip will be removed in 3 to 6 days. Tape, called steri-strips, will be used after these stitches are removed.

What needs to be done at home?

The tape needs to be changed every 1 to 2 days for about 2 to 3 weeks. If the tape is moist or loose you may have to change it more often. If your child goes to school, daycare, or a babysitter, you may want to change the tape before the child leaves home.

To remove tape:

- It is easier if you have a helper, if your child is young. The helper can hold your child's arms above their head. Your child's arms will act like bumpers on the side of their head. This will help to keep your child's head still.
- Put your infant in a car seat while awake if you do not have any help. Put rolled towels on each side of their head to keep it still.
- Dip a cotton swab in warm water. It is important to remove the tape from both sides of the repair. Gently lift a little on one side and then the other, moving slowly toward the center. This will help keep from pulling the incision open.

Clean the area if there is blood or drainage around the nose or near the incision:

- Use a mixture of $\frac{1}{2}$ hydrogen peroxide and $\frac{1}{2}$ tap water.
- Dip a cotton swab in the mixture and gently moisten the area. This will help to you clean off the drainage. Dry the area with another cotton swab.
- After the first week you can gently clean with mild soap and water.

To put the tape on:

- Use Mastisol® adhesive to keep the tape in place. If the Mastisol is a single use packet, break the tube in the center before using it. If you have a bottle of Mastisol, dip a clean cotton swab into the liquid. Put the Mastisol on the area between the nose and the lip. Let the adhesive dry for about 30 to 45 seconds. It should feel sticky when dry. Use your pinky finger to test.
- Cut the steri-strips to fit from smile fold to smile fold and then apply.



ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has:

- Signs of infection. This includes fever, redness or swelling near the incision, or drainage from the incision.
- Special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.