

Pathway for External Fixation and Pin Site Cares

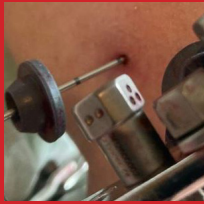
In association with: **NHS**
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Definition:

External fixation is used to keep the bone in position, allowing some degree of load bearing and maintaining stability at the fracture or surgery site.

It is provided through a device where pins and / or wires stabilize the bone through small incisions in the skin and muscle.

These pins / wires are then attached to a strong external frame, either monolateral or circular. Fixators are often used when the fracture is too complex or unstable.



Red Flags

- Spreading redness around pin sites.
- Increased exudate levels from pin site.
- Increased pain that doesn't settle with rest and analgesia.
- Generally feeling unwell.
- Decreased movement or mobility. (unable to weight bare).
- If you have any concerns of increased pain, redness or exudate, escalate to the appropriate practitioner.

Healthy Pin site:

- Clean
- Dry
- No signs of infection.



Top Tip: Do not remove any scabs or crusts from Pin sites as these act as a plug to help prevent infection.

1 Pin site care is an aseptic procedure. Prepare a clean dressing trolley using aseptic non-touch technique with the following:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| - Dressing pack | - Sterile scissors | - Prontosan gel x (squeeze adequate amount into sterile field prior to donning sterile gloves) |
| - Non-woven gauze (You may require more than one pack of gauze depending on the number of pin sites) | - Prontosan wound irrigation solution (pour onto the gauze) | - Extra pair of sterile non-latex gloves. |
| | - Sterile forceps | |
| | - Hand gel | |

↓	2	Prepare yourself for an aseptic non touch procedure e.g. apron and sterile gloves.
↓	3	Cut slits into the dry gauze (one for each pin site); place these to one side to be used later.
↓	4	Soak the remaining uncut gauze with the Prontosan wound irrigation solution.
↓	5	Squeeze out any excess Prontosan solution from the gauze so that it is not dripping wet.
↓	6	Pull up the bungs around each pin site and remove all dressings.
↓	7	Use the forceps and damp gauze to clean around each pin site. (Use one gauze per pin site).
↓	8	Change sterile gloves.
↓	9	Apply a small pea sized amount of Prontosan Gel X to each site.
↓	10	Cover each pin site with the dry split gauze.
↓	11	Replace the bungs to secure the dressing.
↓	12	Document the wound assessments in the patients nursing records accordingly.
↓	13	Repeat this weekly if there is no increased pain, redness or exudate.
↓	14	If there are any Red Flags please escalate to the appropriate practitioner and repeat the pin site cares daily.
	15	Please keep limb dry whilst external fixator is in place.

If the named product on this pathway is not available a temporary second line product is available to use. This can be found within the main text of the Doncaster Wide Wound Care Formulary Document / Sheffield Formulary