Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital
Orthopaedics & Traumatology

Notice for External Fixation Pin Site Wound Care

External fixation is a surgical treatment for fracture fixation, in which pins and screws, linked up by a metal frame (external fixator) are inserted and affixed into bones percutaneously to provide stability during the healing process.

1 Indications

1.1 Fractures that cannot be fixed internally, e.g. presence of contaminated or infected wounds
1.2 Intra-articular or peri-articular fractures
1.3 Limb lengthening to correct limb length discrepancy
1.4 Joint fusion (Arthrodesis) for joint stabilization
1.5 Unstable pelvic ring or cervical fractures

2 External Fixation Pin Site Wound Care

After operation, nurses will perform pin site wound dressing according to the wound condition to prevent wound infection. After discharge, patients should attend Family Medicine Clinic or receive Community Nursing Service for wound dressing as prescribed.

3 Postoperative Care

3.1 Cover sharp ends properly to prevent injuries
3.2 Keep external fixators clean and free of dust
3.3 Ensure sufficient space for mobilizing the operated limbs to prevent accidental injuries
3.4 Wear loose-fitting clothes, or modify with velcro straps
3.5 Avoid wetting wounds while taking bath or shower
3.6 Eat balanced diet with high protein, vitamin C and high calorie food to promote wound healing and recovery (diabetic patients should follow specific instructions). Avoid smoking, alcohol, caffeinated and spicy food
3.7 Attend follow-up appointment as schedule to monitor the progress

4 If the followings occur, please seek medical attention promptly

4.1 Fever with body temperature over 37.5℃/ 99.5℉
4.2 Increase in redness, swelling, local temperature and pain in wound or surrounding area
4.3 Wound with foul-smell or pus discharge
4.4 Skin itching with rashes or blisters
4.5 Cold and pale skin with tingling and numbness sensations in surrounding skin near the pin site or limb extremities
4.6 Breakage of pins or any loosening

For enquiries, please contact nurses in Orthopaedics and Traumatology Day Ward at 25957015 during office hour (7:00 am - 5:00 pm) from Monday to Friday or seek help from community nurses during home visits.