

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Pin Care

Your child just had surgery. Sometimes external rods and clamps need pins to hold bones in place while they heal. This is called **external fixation**. It is important to keep these pin sites clean so germs do not get under the skin and cause infection. We keep these sites clean with pin care.

## When to do pin care:

- If the pin sites are oozing, painful, red or draining, do pin care every 8 hours.
- If the pin sites are not oozing or draining, do pin care once a day.

## What you need:

### If your child's doctor wants you to clean with sterile water:

- sterile water
- sterile cotton swabs
- a clean container

### If your child's doctor wants you to clean with hydrogen peroxide and sterile water:

- equal parts of hydrogen peroxide mixed with sterile water. For example, 2 ounces of hydrogen peroxide and 2 ounces of sterile water mixed together.
- sterile cotton swabs
- a clean container

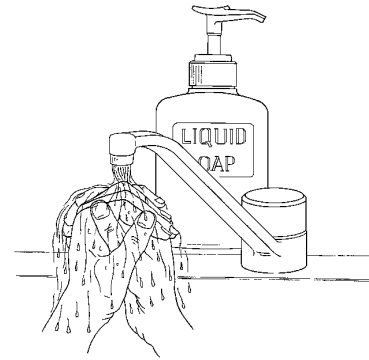
Ask your nurse or doctor for handout: **How to Make Sterile Water and Sterile Saline, #861**

# What to do:

1. Clean your hands with soap and water for 15 to 30 seconds. Rinse, then dry your hands with clean paper towels.

If your hands are not visibly dirty, you can use alcohol based hand rub to clean them using the following steps:

1. Put enough alcohol-based hand rub to fill the palm of your hand.
2. Spread the hand rub over all parts of your hands. Make sure to spread it around your nails and between your fingers.
3. Rub hands until dry.



**Clean your hands  
for 15 to 30 seconds.**

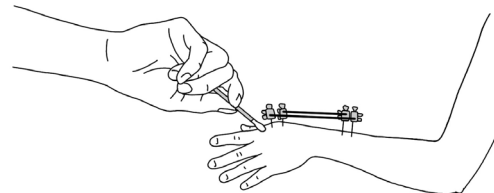
2. Pour about 2 ounces of the fluid in the clean container.

3. Look at the pin site for signs of **infection**:

- oozing
- draining
- odor
- redness
- swelling
- pain

If you see any sign of infection, call your child's doctor when you finish doing the pin care.

4. Dip a cotton swab into the fluid.
5. Place the swab where the pin enters the skin.
6. Move the swab around one half of the pin along the skin.



7. Throw out the swab.
8. Dip another swab into the fluid and clean the other half of the skin around that pin.

9. Throw out that swab.
10. Repeat steps 3 to 9 on each pin.
11. Clean your hands.

## Call the doctor if:

- a pin feels loose and moves when you do pin care.
- you see a sign of infection at a pin site. Signs of infection include:
  - fever greater than 101° F (38.3°C)
  - oozing
  - draining
  - odor
  - redness at pin site
  - swelling
  - increase in pain
- you have any concerns with the pins.

## Now that you've read this:

- Show your nurse or doctor how you would do pin care. (Check when done.)
- Tell your nurse or doctor when you would call your child's doctor. (Check when done.)



If you have any questions or concerns,  
 call your child's doctor or  call \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to know more about child health and illness,  
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
602-933-1400  
866-933-6459  
[www.phoenixchildrens.org](http://www.phoenixchildrens.org)  
[www.theemilycenter.org](http://www.theemilycenter.org)  
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**Disclaimer**

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

January 30, 2017 • Draft to family review  
#552 • Written by Fran London, MS, RN and Heather Shearer, RN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain

## Pin Care

Name of Health Care Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Date returned: \_\_\_\_\_  db

## Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read?  Yes  No

easy to read?  Yes  No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read?  Yes  No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading  
this handout?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any  
questions about the subject?  Yes  No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes

No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

The Emily Center  
Health Education Specialist  
Phoenix Children's Hospital  
1919 East Thomas Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85016-7710

602-933-1395

**Thank you for helping us!**