Dressing & Incision Care

Most incisions are closed with absorbable material that will “dissolve” on its own; hence, there are no stitches that need to be taken out.

We occasionally use staples if the skin is not well perfused or the current surgery is performed through a previous incision. However, staples are never used for anterior cervical surgery (where the incision is in front of the neck).

1. The outer most part of your dressing (which is immediately visible to you) is waterproof
   - You may get this wet and take a shower as early as the day of surgery
Dressing & Incision Care

2.
• Under the clear tape (outermost dressing) is a piece of gauze
• Remove the clear tape and gauze 48-60 hours after your surgery

3.
• Under the gauze, you will find small piece(s) of water proof tape (Steri-strips) which is placed on top of the incision
• You may leave the Steri-strips open to air and do NOT need to cover them with another dressing (sometimes there is slight drainage for a few days after surgery...if this is the case, please cover the Steri-strips with dry gauze and tape)
• You may get these Steri-strips wet when you shower and do not need to cover them
• Gently dry the Steri-strips with a towel after you shower
• They will fall start to curl up and fall off on their own in 7-14 days
4.
- Under the Steri-strip is the surgical incision

- By the time the Steri-strip falls off (in 7-14 days), the incision should have healed (the above picture is a fresh incision prior to the application of the surgical dressing)

- You may start massaging the incision after it has completely healed (generally after 14-18 days)