

**APPENDIX C: SUTURE CHART**

- When supplies are limited, any suture may be used for any purpose; however, as a general guideline, absorbable suture should be used to approximate tissues deep to the skin, silk may be used to ligate blood vessels, and a monofilament suture (nylon/Prolene; Johnson & Johnson) should be used for the skin.
- Most suturing/ligating can be accomplished with 2-0 sutures. Finer suture (3-0 or 4-0) may be used on the face for better cosmetic result. Heavier suture (0 or 1) may be used for DPC of larger wounds or for the scalp.
- Tapered needles are best for suturing soft-tissue layers; cutting needles are best for suturing skin; strait needles do not require a needle holder.
- Undesired tissue reactivity is greater with:
  - Multifilament (compared with monofilament)
  - Larger suture gauge
  - Natural material (compared with synthetic)
- Recommended multipurpose sutures: 2-0 Vicryl suture with CT-1 needle, 0 Prolene or Nylon with FSLX needle, 0 silk with strait needle.

<b>Absorbable Sutures</b>				
Suture	Effective wound support, days	Time to complete absorption, days	Comments	Usual indications
Surgical gut	8–9	30	Rarely used; high tissue reactivity	Approximate soft-tissue layers deep to the skin
Chromic gut	10–21	>90	Gut treated with chromium to decrease tissue reactivity and slow absorption	Approximate soft-tissue layers deep to the skin
Fast-absorbing gut	5–7	14–28	Gut treated with heat to speed absorption	Skin closure when suture removal will be difficult or impossible
Polyglactin (Vicryl)	21	90	Less reactive than gut; synthetic	Approximate soft-tissue layers deep to the skin
Vicryl Rapide (Johnson & Johnson)	10	42	Gamma-irradiated to speed absorption	Skin closure when suture removal will be difficult or impossible
<b>Non Absorbable Sutures</b>				
Suture	Tensile Strength	Tissue Reactivity	Comments	Usual Indications
Silk	Low	High	Multifilament, pliable	Ligate blood vessels
Nylon (e.g., Ethelon; Johnson & Johnson)	High	Low	Monofilament, stiff	Skin closure
Polypropylene (e.g., Prolene)	Moderate	Very Low	Monofilament, less knot security (may need extra knot)	Skin closure, repair blood vessels
<b>Suture Removal Time Frames</b>				
Body Part			Number of Days After Suturing	
Face			4-5	
Scalp			7	
Chest, extremities			10-14	
High tension areas, joint, back			14-21	