

P.E.A.R.L.S. Practical Evidence About Real Life Situations



Glue may be better than stitches, staples or adhesive tape for simple cuts

Clinical Question	What is the best way to repair traumatic skin lacerations in children and adults?
Bottom Line	Pain scores and procedure time significantly favoured tissue adhesives over standard wound care (stitches, staples or adhesive tape). There was no significant difference in cosmetic appearance between tissue adhesive and standard wound care on either a Cosmetic Visual Analogue Scale or Wound Evaluation Score.
Caveat	There were small but statistically significant risk differences for dehiscence (favouring standard wound care, NNH 25*) and erythema (favouring tissue adhesives, NNH10). Although there are a few different types of glue available (based on butylcyanoacrylate and octylcyanoacrylate), no one glue seems to be superior. *NNH = number needed to treat to cause harm in one individual.
Context	Lacerations need to be closed to ensure proper healing and to prevent infection or unattractive scarring. This is the first systematic review comparing glue with standard wound closure.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Farion K, Osmond MH, Hartling L, Russell K, Klassen T, Crumley E, Wiebe N. Tissue adhesives for traumatic lacerations in children and adults. <i>Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews</i> 2001, Issue 4. Art. No.: CD003326. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003326. This review contains 10 studies involving 522 participants.

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NNT = numbers needed to treat to benefit one person

NNH = numbers needed to harm to benefit one person

Both NNT and NNH are only reported if the studies or pooling of studies is statistically significant

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