

Suture Questions and Concerns

Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.med.dentistry/2007-05/msg00655.html>

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 - *Date:* Sat, 26 May 2007 10:01:00 -0400
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Hi everyone,

I am new here. Looks like an great group.

I have some questions about sutures. I just had surgery on a back Torus last Wednesday and the dentist sutured my cuts after he was done and said to come back in a week to have them removed. As an aside he does waterlase surgery, including implants – interesting, since I thought only oral surgeons and periodontists did implants – but not true – this person is a regular dentist. I live in Maryland. He is a nice guy, and he travels all over the world teaching the waterlase stuff for Biolase (interesting since I live in a redneck town in western Maryland – lol).

Anyway, he pared down the Torus using the water laser and osteotomy, and put the sutures in and I was to come back in a week to get them removed as I stated. Today is Saturday (three days later), and the stitches are gone (I mean not even a trace of them – I have checked very closely over and over). When I got home I immediately looked at the surgery of course, and I could only see a stitch on the inboard side of the jawbone where the Torus was, and I could see a stitch (ie black thread) on the top surface with what appeared to be a knot in it. I do not know what type of stitching method he used. I have no teeth behind my second premolar on that side (lower left), and will be getting an implant in the forward molar spot after the Torus heals.

I don't see how he will be able to remove the stitches if he can't see them, and I don't see how they could be totally covered up with tissue in 3 days. The inboard side stitch seemed to disappear within a day (and there is a lot of white dead skin there from the laser I guess), and all I could see was the knot on the upper surface. I saw the knot last night, and this morning it too is totally gone. Not even a sign of any kind of thread anywhere.

This is rather alarming to me. Like I said how will he be able to get the stitches out if they are buried and not visible – without digging them out, which to me would open up my closed wound and would be self defeating. I am still in pain now, but not bad, but it is still quite inflamed, and a lot of white dead tissue. I do not believe it is swelling that is covering the stitches. They seem to have disappeared somehow.

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Is it possible he used absorbable thread by mistake – but I don't see how, since I believe it takes approx. 3 weeks for absorbable stitches to dissolve in tissue. I am not suppose to go back until Thursday to get them removed, so I guess I will call Monday and try to find out what is going on (ie, if they are buried within three days I don't want them getting buried deeper).

Can someone please tell me what is going on here. Is it normal for the removable type dental stitches to disappear like this (within three days). I seriously doubt it. I would appreciate your comments, so I can talk more intelligently when I call Monday. Or am I worrying about nothing and you don't think it is necessary for me to call.

Sorry this was so long. Thank you...Pete

PS – why do dentists use removable stitches instead of absorbable.

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