



Advanced Dermatology

Skin Cancer and
Laser Surgery Center, P.C.

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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AND WOUND CARE FOR MOHS SURGERY WITH SKIN GRAFT

Post-Operative Instructions

Please follow the directions below to best care for your wounds following your surgery and skin graft. Remember, you have 2 areas that have bandage dressings on: your surgical wound that has been repaired with a skin graft and the donor site where your skin was taken from.

Following your surgery, a small amount of blood-tinged drainage is normal. If your dressing becomes saturated with bright, red blood, remove the dressing. Then use a clean gauze pad to apply gentle but firm, direct pressure to the wound for 10 minutes. If the bleeding persists after 10 minutes, apply this gentle pressure for 10 more minutes. If the bleeding has not stopped after 20 minutes, or if a large, swollen, purple area is noted around the surgery site, CALL the office IMMEDIATELY. (Call after hours also, there is always someone on call in case of emergencies).

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- **DO NOT** use any Ice on the surgical site at all. It is very important to **avoid** any type of cold weather. This can cause for the skin graft to die and the site will then have to heal by secondary intention leaving you with an unwanted scar.
- If your surgical site is near the eye, you may experience a black eye and swelling around the eye.
- Stitches (sutures) are usually removed from the skin graft in 7-14 days following your surgery date.
- **DO NOT** use aspirin, aspirin-containing products, ibuprofen or alcohol for the first 48 hours after surgery. If you experience discomfort, you may take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) or Extra Strength Tylenol as directed on the bottle. The doctor may also prescribe a mild narcotic (which must be written and handed to you to take to the pharmacy) in place of Tylenol.

CARE FOR YOUR SURGICAL WOUND AND SKIN GRAFT:

- Your surgical wound has been repaired with a skin graft (taken from another skin site on your body). You should not disturb this bandage for 7 days, you will be scheduled to come in for bandage change in 7 days from the day of your surgery. If the bandage becomes loose or uncomfortable, please call our office to speak to a Mohs nurse. The Mohs nurse can arrange to change your dressing if needed.
- If the dressing falls off, **DO NOT** try to clean the skin graft at all. Gently apply generous amount of antibiotic ointment to the graft with a Q-tip. Then cut a **TELEFA** (non-stick pad) dressing so that it is large enough to cover the skin graft area, then tape it down snugly. (You may have to clean the area around the skin graft (normal skin) with soap and water to allow for the tape

around the skin graft (normal skin) with soap and water to allow for the tape to stick to your skin better). Call the office with any questions or concerns. We do prefer to know you are coming in, therefore call and make an appointment to come in, usually we are able to see you the same day.

- Do Not let another health-care professional try to change the graft dressing or clean the graft area unless this has been approved with your MOHS surgeon or a member from our staff.

CLEANING AND REPLACING YOUR BANDAGE ON YOUR DONOR SITE:

The skin graft was taken from _____ . This is your donor site.

- After the 1st 24-48 hours, begin once a day cleaning of the wound using mild soap and tap water, using a Q-tip or a washcloth to do this cleaning. DO NOT use cotton balls. Gently clean to remove any dried blood or crusting, rinse well with tap water. Do this until there is NO fresh or dried blood. DO NOT use hydrogen peroxide or alcohol.
- Adequate cleaning will prevent a scab from forming. This is important since a thick scab is destructive to good wound healing and may lead to a more noticeable scar.
- After cleaning apply a thick coat of Vaseline or Aquaphor, then cover with a non-stick bandage to keep the donor site moist and well covered until the suture (if any) are removed. Exposure to air can cause a scabbing and prevent the area from healing properly.

FOLLOW UP CARE:

1. Return to our office for dressing change in _____ days.
2. Return to our office for a skin graft check in _____ days.
3. Return to our office in _____ days for suture removal/wound check on the graft and the donor site.
4. Return to our office in _____ days/weeks for follow up care.
5. Have a complete skin check with your general dermatologist of your choice in 6 months from your surgery date, and every 6 months after that at least for 2 years.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR:

- If you have bright, red bleeding from your wound that does not stop after applying gentle, direct pressure for 20 minutes.
- If a large, swollen, purple area is noted around the surgery site.
- If severe inflammation (redness, tenderness, swelling or warmth) or red streaks occur near the wound.

**IF you have any questions or concerns, Please call our office at
303-368-8611 24 hours a day.**