



The Center For Skin Surgery

Wound Care Instructions (Stitches)

The DRESSING should remain in place overnight. If the dressing comes loose before then, re-tape it carefully.

Pain:

Post-operative pain is usually minimal. **Extra-strength “Acetaminophen” (generic Tylenol), two tablets every four to six hours, usually relieves any pain you may have.** Take Extra-strength Acetaminophen when pain begins – do not wait until it is severe. Do not take any aspirin, Ecotrin, Motrin, Advil, or Ibuprofen products. If the surgery is on hands, fingers, lower legs and/or feet, elevate these areas whenever at rest – this should minimize swelling and pain.

Swelling:

To lessen the discomfort, relieve swelling, and minimize bruising, an ice pack or frozen bag of vegetables may be applied over the dressing every 1-2 hours for twenty minutes.

Bleeding:

Careful attention has been given to your wound to prevent bleeding. The dressing you have on is a pressure dressing and will also help to prevent bleeding.

You may notice a small amount of blood on the edges of the dressing the first day and this is **NORMAL**. Limit physical activity for the first week after surgery. If bleeding seems persistent and saturates the dressing, apply firm steady pressure over the dressing with gauze for **15 minutes** by the clock. This is usually adequate treatment.

If bleeding persists please call our office.

Wound Care:

The suture line should be cleaned daily with mild soap and warm water. If any crusts form, you may gently loosen them with a Q-tip. Pat dry. The first day, the wound may be tender and may bleed slightly or seep a small amount of clear fluid. For stubborn crusting, place gauze, wet with tap water, over the wound for 5 minutes to soak and loosen crusting.

- Apply a layer of petroleum jelly (Vaseline) over the entire wound. Cover the wound with a Telfa (non-stick) dressing or a gauze pad and a piece of paper tape. It is preferred to keep the wound covered.
- If you have dissolving sutures, please follow the above directions. The sutures will fall out by themselves over the next two weeks. Wash carefully the first week. Rub and scrub with a washcloth the second week to encourage the sutures to fall out.
- If you have Steri-strips, remove gauze and tape the morning after surgery. Then remove Steri-strips, if any remain, after 7 days. Please note: **DO NOT USE** ointment over Steri-strips

You may shower and allow the wound to get wet; however, do not let the forceful stream of the shower hit the wound directly.

You may be given an ace wrap if the surgery is on your arms or legs. Wrap your arm or leg with the ace wrap – do not place too tightly – for 2 weeks following surgery. Keep limb elevated whenever at rest.

You will return to our office in _____ week for suture removal.

Appearance:

There may be swelling and bruising around the wound, especially near the eyes. The area may remain numb for several weeks or even months. You may also experience periodic pains near the wound as it heals.

The suture line will be dark pink at first and the edges of the wound will be reddened. This will lighten up day by day and will be less tender. If the wound becomes increasingly inflamed, warm, drains a pus-like substance, or if you develop a fever or chills, please call our office immediately.