



Wound Care Following Dermatologic (Skin) Surgery

- Try to take it easy! Do not do things to raise your blood pressure, such as exercising, drinking alcohol, or lifting weights. Do not perform activities that may stretch the wound. This will minimize bleeding and the appearance of the scar.
- Please remove the dressing for bandage 24 hours following surgery. Once the bandage has been removed, you may begin taking showers, but avoid spraying water directly on the wound.
- Begin twice a day (morning and evening) cleansing the wound, using mild soap and water. Do this using a Q-tip or clean gauze. Gently cleanse to remove any dried blood or excess crusting and rinse well with tap water. Do this until there is not fresh or dried blood. Continue cleansing with mild soap and water until the wound is completely healed. Do not use alcohol, hydrogen peroxide, or creams unless your doctor tells you to do so.
- After cleansing, apply a coating of Vaseline. Keep Vaseline on the wound at all times until the sutures dissolve (if used). Apply a bandage/Band-Aid (depending on the size of the wound) until the stitches are removed or until the wound is healed.
- Move wounds may be left uncovered after five to seven days. However, wounds that are on an area of the body that may become easily irritated should be covered with a bandage during the daytime for any additional five to seven days. This bandage can be removed at night.
- Allow any scab that forms to fall off on its own. Do not pick at it.
- Avoid hot tubs, swimming, or taking baths for 2 weeks following your surgery.
- If you have sutures, the superficial layer will dissolve in 7-14 days.
- Your pathology report may take 10-14 days to come back from the pathologist's office. Please call 251-289-1786 if you have not heard from us within two weeks after your procedure.

What to Expect After Your Procedure

- A minor amount of swelling, bruising, discomfort, and even some bleeding is common following the surgical procedure. Your wound may remain pink and slightly swollen for several months.
- The numbing medication will wear off in about 1-2 hours. Your pain can be treated with an ice pack. You can take one or two Extra Strength Tylenol every 4-6 hours (up to 4 gm-8 pills) a day to help with any discomfort. Avoid the use of aspirin or ibuprofen unless specified by your primary care doctor.
- If bleeding starts, apply direct pressure for 10 minutes. Do not peek. If you do, this will disturb the forming clot. If this does not slow down the bleeding, repeat 2 more times. If this fails, seek medical attention.

When to Call

Call the nurse at 251-289-1786 if you notice:

- Sever inflammation (redness, tenderness, swelling, or warmth) that lasts more than 3 to 7 days.
- Red streaks near the wound.
- Increased body drainage.
- Green or yellow drainage or a foul smell coming from your wound.
- A fever greater than 101 degrees F. that continues after three days.
- Bright red bleeding that does not stop after applying direct, firm pressure as directed above.
- A large, swollen purple area (hematoma) around the surgery site.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Sunrise Dermatology at 251-289-1786 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.