

Desert Oasis Dermatology Post-Operative Wound Care Instructions

Changing the Dressing

Items You May Need (dependent on individual instructions):

- Large Regular Band-Aid (If Band-Aid causes irritation, you may use Telfa non-stick pad and paper tape instead)
- Aquaphor, Vaseline, or Mupirocin ointment

Instructions:

1. The first dressing change should occur approximately **24-48 hours** after the initial dressing was applied.
2. Gently remove the old dressing. You may wet the old dressing with water to help it soak off if needed.
3. Gently allow warm water and mild soap to run over the surgical site in the shower.
4. Pat the area dry with a clean gauze pad or paper towel.
5. Apply a **THICK layer** of Aquaphor, Vaseline, or Mupirocin ointment to the wound.
6. Cover the wound with a large Band-Aid or a non-stick dressing and paper tape, as instructed.
7. Follow this procedure at least **twice daily** until sutures are removed. More frequent ointment application can promote better wound healing and minimize scarring.

During the Healing Process

- Upon removing the initial dressing, you may shower and allow the wound to get wet. However, **do not allow a forceful stream of water to hit the wound directly.**
- If the wound is on the scalp, you may wash your hair with baby shampoo to avoid irritation.
- **Avoid bending, lifting anything greater than 10 lbs, or exercising** for 2-3 weeks following your procedure, as instructed in your wound care plan.
- It is normal for the edges around the wound to be pink and slightly tender to the touch.
- You may experience mild itching or periodic discomfort around the wound.
- Numbness in the area surrounding the surgical site is also common.

- **If the wound becomes red, hot, or painful to touch, please call our office immediately.**

After 2-3 Weeks of Healing

- Apply a sunscreen of **SPF 30 or greater** whenever you go outside, especially to the healing area.
- Please remember that your follow-up visits are important for monitoring your healing progress.

Managing Potential Complications After Surgery

- **Pain:** Discomfort after surgery is usually mild. You may take Tylenol or extra-strength Tylenol for pain every 6 hours. If permitted by your primary care doctor, you can also take 400mg ibuprofen every 6 hours. To lessen discomfort, decrease swelling, and minimize bruising, an ice pack may be applied over the dressing for 20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off, and repeated. Elevating the wound area is also helpful.
- **Bleeding:** A pressure dressing has been applied to your wound to prevent bleeding and minimize swelling. You may notice a small amount of blood on the edges of the dressing, which is normal.
 - **If enough bleeding occurs to soak through the dressing:** Apply firm pressure with fresh gauze or a paper towel for **20 minutes continuously, timed with a clock, without peaking!** If bleeding starts again after 20 minutes, this may be repeated.
 - If the bleeding does not stop or restarts a third time, please call the dermatology office. If the office is closed, you can go to the emergency department.
- **Infection:** Some redness, pain, and swelling are normal after surgery. However, if you experience redness or pain that has continued to worsen by day 3, or if you notice pus-like discharge or a fever greater than 100.4°F, please call the dermatology office. **Do not apply Neosporin or Bacitracin to the area.**
- **Wound Separation:** This can be limited by avoiding activities that lead to tension across the incision site, as instructed in your wound care. Remember, the strength of the healing site is only 15% of the original skin 3 weeks after healing time occurs. If this complication occurs, please call the office.

Contact Us: If you have any concerns or experience any of the complications listed above, please call Desert Oasis Dermatology at **(480) 418-3314**.