

Post Operative Instructions After Skin Surgery

Sutured Closures

We know that having skin surgery can be a stressful experience. Please review the following information to answer common questions and issues that can come up in the postoperative period.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Bruising, swelling, and some pain are expected after surgery. These will typically resolve in 1-2 weeks; although, wounds on the hands, legs, and feet may take longer to improve.
- Black eye(s) and eyelid swelling may occur and is a normal postoperative experience. If you experience any pain with eye movement, please contact us immediately.
- Your wound may feel tight, itchy, or numb. This will gradually improve over several months.
- Your wound may initially appear red, raised or bumpy, which will gradually improve as the internal stitches dissolve. Typically, internal sutures dissolve in 3 months.
- Starting 2 weeks after surgery, you can massage your scar with gentle but firm pressure to help the internal stitches dissolve and flatten the scar.
- You may experience periodic sharp pains near the wound as it heals.
- Every patient is different and follows a different time course of wound healing. It may take up to 6-12 months to see what the final scar will look like, however, there are several treatment options Dr. Guidry recommends to improve the appearance of the scar including but not limited to the use of silicone scar gel, scar revision surgery, ablative CO2 laser, etc. We will review these in detail at your suture removal appointment.
- *It is important to note that following proper wound care is the first step in your healing process.*

DAILY WOUND CARE ROUTINE

We have applied a bulky pressure bandage to your site today. This is meant to put pressure on your surgery site, which prevents bleeding. Please keep this bandage on and dry for 48 hours. After that, you may remove the bandage and start wound care. Please perform the following steps every day until your scheduled suture removal appointment:

1. Wash the site gently with water and antibacterial soap, such as Liquid Dial. Avoid scrubbing or using a washcloth as this may be too abrasive for the sutures.
2. Pat the area dry with a clean towel. Then, using fingers or a QTip apply a thin layer of Vaseline or Aquaphor over the suture/staple line. *Please refrain from using neosporin as this may result in redness and irritation at the surgical site.*
3. Apply a new bandage over the site. We have supplied a white non-stick pad that can be cut to fit the area and then covered with tape/adhesive of your choosing.
4. Remember to repeat these steps once daily until your sutures are removed. If Dr. Guidry used all dissolving sutures, then perform wound care daily for 2 weeks.

BLEEDING

- A small amount of blood on the dressing is **normal**.
- Limit your physical activity for at least 48 hours after surgery. Anything that gets your heart rate or blood pressure up will make you more likely to have bleeding.
- If your bandage is soaked in blood or blood is dripping out from underneath your bandage, then you should remove your bandage and apply **firm** pressure. Place a clean washcloth over the sutured area and press firmly for 20 minutes without looking. We recommend you set a timer. Most of the time, this will stop any bleeding.
- While holding pressure, placing an ice pack on nearby skin can also help stop bleeding.
- If the bleeding persists after firm pressure, contact our office at 918-728-3100 or if after hours contact Dr. Jacqueline Guidry at 918-728-8191.

PAIN

- Start by taking acetaminophen 1000 mg by mouth every 8 hours.
- If tylenol is not enough, add in ibuprofen (advil) 400 mg every 6 hours.
- If you were given or are taking a prescription pain medication, it may already contain acetaminophen. **Do not exceed 3500mg of acetaminophen or 2400mg of ibuprofen in a 24-hour period.**
- We recommend applying an ice pack over the bandage for 10 minutes every hour while you are awake the day of and the day after your surgery. This helps decrease swelling, bruising and pain significantly.
- Elevate the surgical site to minimize swelling, if the site is located on your head or neck, sleeping in a recliner or with an extra pillow is encouraged. If the site is located on your hand, leg or foot, please keep it elevated as much as possible for the first 48 hours. For sites on the leg or foot, we recommend using compression socks or an ace wrap until suture removal.
- If the wound becomes increasingly red, warm, or drains a pus-like substance, or if you develop a fever or chills, we recommend you contact our office at 918-728-3100 or if after hours contact Dr. Jacqueline Guidry at 918-728-8191.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office should you have any questions or concerns regarding your wound care at 918-728-3100.