

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR SURGICAL WOUND

Our goal in performing surgeries is to remove the abnormal or cosmetically desirable part of the skin and to produce a scar as imperceptible as possible. You, the patient, play a very important role in assuring good cosmetic healing. The following instructions will help with maximizing your healing process.

1. **The pressure dressing** that we apply before you leave should be left on for **24 | 48 | ____** hours and not allowed to get wet. No bathing or showering while the pressure dressing is on. After removing, check for extreme swelling of the wound, which could indicate bleeding deep in the wound. After removing this dressing, if you do notice this extreme swelling or signs of infection (exquisite tenderness, redness, swelling and/or foul drainage), please notify us immediately. Please check your wound daily for these characteristics.
2. **If bleeding** occurs from wound, hold firm pressure directly to the site with your fingertips over a clean cloth. Apply pressure for 30 minutes without letting up. **Do not** look at the wound until the 30 minutes have finished. If the bleeding does not stop, please notify us. If you cannot get in touch with the office go to your local emergency department. **Avoid strenuous activities for the first week as that this may cause bleeding.**
3. **To clean** the wound, combine **1 teaspoon** of white vinegar with **8 ounces** of water. Do not use any other type of vinegar. Soak a cotton ball, Q-tip or soft cloth in solution. Saturate wound for about 2 minutes. Rub the wound with enough pressure to remove all crust and build up has been removed. Do this twice a day until you come for your stitch removal appointment or for _____ days. **THE VINEGAR/WATER MIXTURE MUST BE DISCARDED AFTER EVERY USE TO AVOID CONTAMINATION.**
4. After cleaning the site apply **Vaseline | Mupiorcin** to wound at least twice a day. Apply enough of the ointment to keep the wound site moist between dressing changes. Cover the ointment with a bandage, made of a **Telfa pad** and **paper tape**. If you find that the wound is dry at the dressing change you must either apply more ointment at each dressing change or change the bandage more frequently. Rotate the way you tape the site to minimize skin irritation.
5. **It is very important to keep the area moist and not allow a scab to form. This will not only increase the speed at which the area heals but will also minimize the scar that will occur.**
6. **Dehiscence.** If your wound pops open, call us as soon as possible you will need to be seen.
7. **Pain.** Extra strength Tylenol as needed for discomfort or pain. Maximal discomfort usually occurs in the first 48 hours and improves daily. If you pain is increasing please contact the office.
8. **Activity.** you should avoid activities that cause tension or stretching of the surgical area for 2-4 weeks or according to your doctor's recommendation.
9. **Your scar** may be very noticeable initially, but with time (usually several months), the pink color fades and irregularities become smoother. Complete scar maturation may take up to 18 months.
10. You should return in _____ days for suture removal/wound check.

Thank you for letting us participate in your care.

William D. Tutrone, M.D.