



## Skin & Laser Surgery Center, P.C.

Dermatology, Laser, Cosmetic & Mohs Skin Cancer Surgery

### Post Operative Wound Care Instructions - Skin Grafts

1. **Remove the original bandage or dressing after the first 72 hours of the surgery** or as otherwise directed. **Do not get the bandage wet**, you may cover it with a plastic wrap while showering. If the bandage happens to get wet, change it.
2. Change the dressing after 72 hours by following these steps (scan **QR code** in the upper-right hand corner):
  - a. Wash hands before and after each dressing change.
  - b. Using your fingertips or a clean Q-tip, gently wash the wound with soap and water.
  - c. Pat the area dry.
  - d. Apply **Mupirocin Antibiotic Ointment mixed with Aquaphor/Vaseline/petroleum jelly** to Telfa or any non-adherent dressing (available at most retail pharmacies) that is cut approximately the same size as the wound.
  - e. Place the Telfa covered with ointment over the wound and secure with paper tape or Hypafix.
  - f. For the legs and arms: After bandage application, wrap area with a Coban (adherent cohesive wrap) or Ace bandage for extra compression.
  - g. **Leave this bandage on until your follow up wound check (one week after initial graft application).** At this time, the site will be evaluated. If an artificial graft was initially placed, a new one may be applied.
3. For proper healing avoid the following:
  - a. Alcohol and aspirin (including baby aspirin 81 mg) and aspirin like products such as Ecotrin, Bufferin, Motrin, Advil, Nuprin, Aleve etc. for 2 days because they thin the blood and may cause bleeding. **Extra Strength (500mg) Tylenol** may be used for pain relief if needed. Take 2 tablets (1000 mg) every 6-8 hours depending on pain.
  - b. If pain becomes unbearable please contact the office for more instruction.
  - c. Strenuous exercises, sport & physical activities such as heavy lifting, excessive bending, twisting, golfing, swimming, biking, running, & playing tennis, etc. should be avoided for approximately 2-3 weeks.
4. If your wound becomes red, warm to touch, painful or begins to drain; please contact the office or doctor immediately.
5. If bleeding occurs, **remove the dressing** and apply direct and constant pressure over the wounded area using gauze or a dry washcloth for 20 minutes. It is important that the amount of pressure used is constant and uninterrupted for that time. Once the appropriate length of time has elapsed and the bleeding continues, contact our office and proceed to the nearest emergency room unless directed to do otherwise.
6. To help minimize swelling:
  - a. Sleep with 2-3 pillows for the first few nights.
  - b. Ice the area using crushed ice over a small towel/wash cloth for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.
  - c. Sleep on the unaffected side.
  - d. If procedure was done to an arm or leg keep elevated for at least 2 days whenever possible.

Swelling of the area around the eye can happen if the procedure is done anywhere above or around the eyes. That swelling may continue and peak 2 days after the procedure but will subside.

#### Healing Process

During the healing process, you may notice some or all of the following:

- Swelling/discoloration/**bruising** surrounding the surgical site. This is particularly common around the eyes and the face. The bruising and swelling may spread to other areas (eg. opposite side of face where the procedure was done) but will subside and resolve over the next several days.
- Sensation of tightness as your wound heals. This is normal and will gradually subside.
- Redness/itching of the surgical sight and surrounding tissue. This is normal. Vaseline helps relieve itching.
- Sensitivity to temperature changes. This will improve with time but try to avoid temperature extremes.

#### Signs of Complications

- Severe pain with swelling that is not controlled with Tylenol may indicate bleeding under the skin.
- Pain that worsens each day, rather than improving.
- Severe itching with extensive redness may indicate infection or sensitivity to the dressing ointment or tape.

**Call our office immediately if you experience what you believe to be a complication as described. Contact our office via telephone (listed below) or at [info@bderm.com](mailto:info@bderm.com).**

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