

Dermatology Associates - Mohs Micrographic Surgery

WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Good care of the wound will increase how quickly it heals and will improve the appearance of the eventual scar.

Standard once daily dressing change :

- Wash hands and remove original dressing 24 hours after the completion of your surgery. Sometimes it is helpful to soak the bandage with water if it is sticking to the wound.
- Gently clean wound with regular soap and warm water. Rinse with water and gently pat the wound dry with gauze or a dry cloth. Avoid rubbing the area.
- Apply a thick layer of petrolatum (Vaseline®) ointment with a Q-tip or by using the dressing in the next step.
- Cover the Vaseline® with a piece of the non-stick dressing (cut to fit size of wound). If the wound is large or draining, place some gauze over the non-stick dressing.
- Secure the dressing with paper tape.

Repeat this process of cleaning and dressing the wound at least once a day until the stitches completely dissolve or are removed. After any oozing/drainage has stopped, there is no need for the overlying tape dressing, but you **should continue to keep the wound moist with Vaseline® for at least two weeks.**

What to expect after surgery:

- Swelling and redness will occur around the wound for several days. Skin around the eyes is often very swollen and bruised (may have a bag-like appearance) for several days.
- A low-grade fever (99°-100°) may occur, and can be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol®). Expect a small amount of bleeding or oozing in the first 3-4 days. This will be minimized by limiting physical activity for at least the first 48 hours after surgery. **If heavy bleeding occurs, apply firm constant pressure to the dressing with fingertips and a dry, clean wash cloth for 45 minutes. If bleeding continues after 45 minutes of constant pressure, call the doctor. If you are unable to reach the doctor, go to the Emergency Room.**
- Pain is usually limited to an aching sensation as the local anesthetic wears off. In nearly all cases, extra-strength Tylenol® will relieve this discomfort (Tylenol max 4000mg / day). If Tylenol alone does not provide relief, you can alternate Tylenol with Ibuprofen (Advil®) (Ibuprofen max 2400mg / day. In doing so, a one or the other would be taken every 2-3 hours until pain subsides (usually within the first 48 hours after surgery).
- For the first several days, expect an increase in swelling, redness, and tenderness. After 3-5 days things should start to improve. If after this initial improvement you later notice a return of swelling, redness, tenderness, or drainage you should call our office.

Wound healing in by itself:

- If your wound is healing in by itself, or sutures were not used, then the healing process will take several weeks, and the cleaning and Vaseline® routine should be continued on a daily basis until the wound is completely healed. ***It is very important NOT to allow the wound to dry out or form a scab.***
- Drainage is to be expected in wounds that are not stitched. The drainage may be yellow-green and have a slight odor. It usually begins several days after surgery. It is important not to allow the wound bed to dry out - the wound should always be covered with Vaseline®.

Skin Graft Instructions:

- It is ideal for initial pressure bandage to be left on and dry for 1 week. However, if for some reason it does not, 3, 4, 5 days (the longer the better) is ok.
- After bandage is removed, gently clean graft area with soap and water by dabbing/patting. Do not rub or scrub aggressively.
- Apply Vaseline, cover with a piece of the non-stick dressing and secure with paper tape. There can sometimes be a dark crust over graft. Just apply Vaseline over crust to keep soft.
- Repeat Steps 2 and 3 DAILY until follow up appointment. (Usually in 1 more week).

Please call our office with any problems during office hours – Mon – Fri 8AM-5PM:

Kingsport - 423-230-3145

Bristol – 423-764-7131 ext 5094

Johnson City – 423-928-8088

After 5pm and on weekends:

Dr. Thomas' mobile number is 423-202-8626

Dr. Reid's mobile number is 859-552-0260

Dr. Trickett's mobile number is 915-867-8821