

Mohs Surgery
Department Phone: (208) 813-3250

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WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUTURED WOUNDS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- ◆ Take it easy! Do not do anything that raises your blood pressure or heart rate for at least 2 days. No exercising, lifting, bending, stretching, or straining. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours.
- ◆ Do not be surprised if you see a small amount of blood-tinged drainage. If your dressing becomes saturated with bright, red blood, remove the dressing. Then use clean gauze to apply gentle, but firm direct pressure to the wound for 20 minutes (no peeking). **If the bleeding has not stopped after 20 minutes, or there is a large, swollen, purple area around the surgery site; call our office at (208) 884-3376 or the Emergency Contact Information below.** If the bleeding stops, then clean and redress the surgical site.
- ◆ Bruising and swelling around the surgical site is normal. If your surgery was near the eye, forehead, nose, or cheeks you may experience a black eye. Your eye may even swell shut. Do not be frightened if this happens. The swelling will resolve over the next several days, but will likely be worse in the morning and improve throughout the day as you are upright.
- ◆ If your surgical site is on the head or face, sleep with your head elevated about 30 degrees (a couple of pillows) for the first couple nights to decrease swelling. It may be helpful to sleep in a recliner.

**If you
bleed**

**Pain
Control**

- ◆ Alternate Acetaminophen (500 mg) and Ibuprofen (600mg) within 1 hour of surgery:
Start with Acetaminophen 500mg (2 tablets okay for first dose)
3-4 hours later: Ibuprofen 600mg
3-4 hours later: Acetaminophen 500mg
3-4 hours later: Ibuprofen 600mg
-Continue to alternate until you feel little to no pain at the end of a dosing interval.

Only take these if you have been told that they are okay for you, as some patients may not take them due to preexisting medical conditions (eg. Patients on Warfarin cannot take ibuprofen.)

**Ice
the
area**

- ◆ After the day of surgery you may apply ice to the surgical site to reduce any swelling. Apply ice every few hours while you are awake. Apply the ice bag about 15 minutes at a time **over the top of your dressing**. A bag of frozen vegetables (peas or corn) works very well also. Do not apply ice directly to the skin.

CLEANING AND PUTTING A NEW DRESSING ON YOUR SURGICAL SITE:

*****2 days (48 hours) after surgery*****

Clean
and re-
bandage
the
wound

- ◆ ALWAYS **WASH YOUR HANDS** PRIOR TO CHANGING YOUR DRESSING
- ◆ It is often helpful to get the pressure bandage wet when removing it.
- ◆ Use warm water and mild soap such as Cetaphil® or Cerave ® cleanser to gently wash the area. Gently remove any dried blood or excess crust by using cotton tip applicator or gauze and then rinse. **Do not use cotton balls.**
- ◆ After cleaning, allow to air dry for 5-10 minutes then apply a thin coat of Vaseline® or Aquaphor®. Then apply a new thin bandage (non-stick gauze and paper tape). The bandage only has to be large enough to cover the stitches
- ◆ Keeping your wound clean and moist will prevent a thick scab from forming. This will help to reduce a noticeable scar.
- ◆ If a scab forms allow it to fall off on its own. Do NOT pick the scab off.
- ◆ Dressings should be changed once daily after removing clinic applied dressing. Keep the wound moist with Vaseline® or Aquaphor® for a minimum of 7 days.
- ◆ Suture removal appointment is scheduled at time of surgery **OR** if a dissolving suture is placed then they typically dissolve in 7-14 days.
- ◆ Re dress the surgical wound for a minimum of 7 days. Continue daily applications of Vaseline until the wound stops forming a crust or scab.

Scan the QR code for a wound care instruction video:



CALL THE DOCTOR IF YOU NOTICE:

- ◆ Bright red bleeding from your wound that does not stop after applying gentle, direct pressure for 20 minutes.
- ◆ A large, swollen, tender, purple area around either surgery site (hematoma).
- ◆ Redness or swelling that lasts more than 4 days.
- ◆ Increased bloody drainage, green or yellow drainage, or a foul smelling drainage from your wound.
- ◆ A fever greater than 101° F that continues after 3 days.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office at (208) 813-3250.

For after-hours emergency, call Dr. Thorpe's cell phone at (801)-400-5691.

- ◆ If you are unable to reach Dr. Thorpe please go to your local hospital emergency department.