



EXCISION/MOHS POSTOPERATIVE WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- The dressing should remain in place for **24 hrs 48 hrs 72 hrs**. If the dressing comes loose before then, re-tape it carefully.
- Take Extra Strength Tylenol (Acetaminophen) for pain. Avoid taking NSAIDS (such as Aspirin, Advil, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, Naprosyn) as these may increase the risk of bleeding.
- You may shower after **24 hrs 48 hrs 72 hrs**. Gentle running water and pat dry is OK.

If you have Steri-strips tape (skin colored tape) on the suture line; please leave the tape alone. It will come off on its own or until we remove it during your suture removal visit.

If you DO NOT have Steri-strip tape, after shower or gentle wash, apply a thin layer of **Aquaphor or Vaseline** (all of which can be purchased over the counter) over the wound. Cover the wound with Telfa (non-stick) dressing, gauze pad, and a piece of paper tape (a Band-Aid is OK).

- You may notice a small amount of blood on the edges of the dressing the first day (**THIS IS NORMAL**).
- Relax and limit your physical activity for the first 48 hours after surgery. Ideally, avoid exercise until sutures are removed (1-2 weeks).
- **If your surgery was on the face or scalp**, keep your head elevated for 48 hours. Sleep with extra pillows to help with swelling.
- If bleeding seems persistent and soils the dressing; apply firm, steady pressure over the dressing with gauze for 15-20 minutes. If the bleeding continues to persist, please call our office at [Warwick: **(401) 490-4515** or Cranston: **(401) 943-0761**]. After hours, please page **(401) 357-4737**, your doctor will return your call.
- If your wound becomes increasingly painful, inflamed, warm, drains a pus-like substance, or if you develop fever or chills, please contact the office immediately.
- If you have stopped your Aspirin one week prior to surgery, you can resume taking the medication three days after surgery. Do not stop any prescribed medications including blood thinners unless instructed by a physician

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- If your doctor asks you to take oral antibiotics, please follow the instructions that your doctor gave to you.



POST OPERATIVE WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS

The importance of post-operative care to your surgical site cannot be over stressed. The care you take of yourself and your surgical wound is extremely important to the success of the procedure, your recovery, and wellbeing.

There are several things that could happen following surgery

1. **BLEEDING:** Bleeding can occur following surgery. To reduce the possibility of bleeding, the following instructions are given:
 - a. Limit activities for 24-48 hours. Avoid exercise until sutures are removed (1-2 weeks).
 - b. Keep the operative site elevated (if appropriate)
 - c. If surgery was on the face, head or neck:
 - i. Avoid stooping or bending
 - ii. Avoid straining to have a bowel movement
 - iii. Sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows.

Should bleeding occur, apply firm constant pressure on the bandage for 20 minutes. (no peeking, time yourself using a watch). In most cases, this will stop minor bleeding. If there is still bleeding, apply firm constant pressure for another 20 minutes. If still bleeding, please contact us.

2. **SWELLING:** Swelling occurs because surgery has caused a wound and your body reacts to that injury.
3. **PAIN:** Pain, postoperatively, is generally slight. In nearly all cases, Extra Strength Tylenol will relieve any pain you may experience.
 - a. For flap repairs, postoperative pain may be moderate in the first 24 hours. We recommend alternating Extra Strength Tylenol with Ibuprofen every 4-6 hours as needed, not to exceed the daily maximum for either. Avoid aspirin and NSAIDs.
4. **INFECTION:** Infection seldom occurs when the wound care instructions have been carefully followed.

SIGNS OF INFECTION ARE: Increased pain, swelling, redness or opaque yellowish drainage several days after surgery.

There will be a scar and redness in the scar after surgery. This will decrease as healing progresses but redness should be expected as long as six months. Everyone heals differently and the final scar appearance will vary depending on the individual's ability to heal. In other words, some scars heal and can hardly be seen while others become thick and/or tender. Due to the unpredictability in wound healing, the final appearance cannot be preoperatively ascertained.

Special Instructions:

1. Limit activities for 24-48 hours; avoid exercise for 1 week (head/neck surgery); 2 weeks (body/extremity surgery)
2. Keep surgery site elevated
3. If bleeding is not taken care of with applying pressure, please contact the office.
4. Take Extra Strength Tylenol if pain persists
5. Follow instructions for wound care
6. Notify the office immediately should bleeding persist, increasing pain, or signs of infection occur.

During clinic hours: [Warwick: (401) 490-4515 or Cranston: (401) 943-0761] After hours: (401) 357-4737