

Skin Surgery Clinic

Nurses

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After Skin Surgery: General Instructions

General

Instructions

- Leave the bandage we put on the wound for 24-48 hours
- Have someone with you for the first days after surgery — don't be alone that night if possible! If not, make sure you can contact us with problems.
- Rest as much as you can for the first few days after surgery
- Maintain your normal diet and fluid intake

Pain and Swelling

- If you have pain, take Tylenol (plain or extra strength, 1 to 2 pills every 4 hours)
- Avoid aspirin and aspirin-like drugs for 1 week following surgery. For example, avoid Anacin, Alka-seltzer, Excedrin, Motrin, Bufferin)
- Keeping the site elevated can often reduce swelling
- Cool compresses are sometimes helpful, but avoid direct ice on the area

Exercise

- Avoid anything that puts excessive pressure or strain on the wound site. It can increase your risk of bleeding, bruising and poor healing. For example:

Face

- Until your stitches are removed, avoid vigorous activities that make you flush

Body

- Avoid moderate to heavy lifting or jogging

Back

- Avoid reaching forward and excessive lifting

Leg and foot

- Avoid excessive standing or walking for the first few days after surgery.
- Keep your legs up as much as you can.
- Avoid tight fitting clothing or shoes.

Swimming

- Do not swim until after your stitches are removed, and avoid potentially contaminated water on your wound at all times. Keeping the wound site dry and covered with ointment is best, at least until the stitches are removed.

Danger signs

- **If the wound becomes more red, tender or swollen after one to two days, please notify us or consult with your family physician.**
- Remember, the wound will be red, tender and swollen after surgery, but this should start to improve after 1-2 days, not get worse!
- **If bleeding cannot be controlled with constant pressure for 15 minutes by the clock, notify us or your family physician immediately!**

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