

## Postoperative Wound Care Instructions

### For the first 24 hours after surgery:

1. Keep the surgical site and bandage dry
2. Apply ice to the area, 15 to 20 minutes every hour until bedtime
  - Applying ice to the area will help to reduce both pain and swelling
  - A “baggy” filled with crushed ice and wrapped in a thin towel will do nicely

### Two times daily, starting 24 hours after surgery:

1. Wash your hands with soap before changing the bandage
2. Apply hydrogen peroxide to suture line with a Q-Tip to remove any crusts from the wound 1-2 times up to 24 hours post op only.
3. Cover the site with a clean Band-Aid and Neosporin
  - \*\*Typically, the site can get wet starting 24-48 hours after surgery, do not submerge in water.
  - \*\* Continue wound care and bandaging twice a day for the specified length of time according to the surgical site location below(unless otherwise specified by the doctor):  
Face & Scalp – 5-7days / Trunk & Extremities - 7-10 days.  
Sunscreen and make-up can be applied to the surgical area after bandaging ends

**1. Bleeding:** If bleeding occurs following surgery, apply constant pressure on the bandage for 20 minutes! That will usually stop minor bleeding. If bleeding does not stop, notify our office immediately!!! **Phone number (814) 849-6591**

- 2. Activity:** To reduce the possibility of bleeding, please follow these instructions:
- Limit all activities for the first 24 hours and limit strenuous activities for the first 2 weeks following surgery. Limiting activities will help in the healing of your scar and cosmetic outcome.
  - Keep the operative site elevated (if appropriate)
  - If your surgery was on the face, head or neck: avoid bending or heavy lifting and straining, and sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows

**3. Swelling:** Swelling occurs because surgery has caused a wound and your body reacts to that injury. To reduce swelling: apply ice to the area as instructed

- 4. Pain:** Pain postoperatively is generally slight. Tylenol can be taken for discomfort. If a prescription is given for pain medication, do not use Tylenol at the same time.
- Please do not take aspirin or ibuprofen for several days, because they promote bleeding.

- 5. Infection:** Infection seldom occurs when the wound care instructions have been carefully followed.
- Signs of infection are: increased pain, increased swelling, increased redness, warmth of the skin, or excessive yellowish drainage several days after surgery. Call our office immediately if any of these symptoms occur.
  - Note: Some pain, swelling, and redness after the surgery is normal. If they continue to persist and/or increase please call.

**6. Scar:** The way the scar will look depends on its size, location, your genetics, and general health. At first, it may be very bruised, lumpy, firm, red, numb, and uneven. Although the bruising will go away within 1 to 2 weeks, the scar could remain numb, firm, and reddish for up to a year. Remember, everyone heals at a different rate. See our website for further details.

**7. Follow up:** Many of our patients’ are not required to return to the office for a postoperative visit. This is determined on the day of your surgery. We require that you call our office with any questions or concerns that you may have. We will call you with pathology results once they are read by the Doctor. Usually within 1-2 weeks. Make sure you provide us with a current telephone number to reach you.