



Post-Operative Wound Care Instructions

1. First 24 hours:

- The initial bandage covering the surgical site should stay dry and in-place for _____ hours/.
- Greatly reduce your activity level.
- For sites on the head and neck: no bending-over for 48 hours. Elevate the head on 2 pillows to sleep at night.
- For sites on the legs and feet: keep the legs elevated, above the level of the heart, as often as possible.
- You may take a shower after your initial pressure bandage is removed (see recommended timeframe above.)

2. Dressing Changes:

- You will need: mild soap, Vaseline, non-stick bandages, gauze and tape
- Begin by washing your hands with soap and water. **Using your fingertips only**, wash the surgical site gently with soap and water (you can also wash in the shower). **DO NOT use a washcloth.** DO NOT shave over the sutures while they are present.
- Apply a thin layer of Vaseline with a Q-Tip and cover with non-stick bandage. A moist wound always heals better than a wound allowed to dry out. Surgical sites should remain covered until sutures are removed.
- Repeat the daily dressing changes for _____ Day(s).

3. Pain:

- Discomfort is usually managed by taking Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol
- Okay to alternate Tylenol with ibuprofen 24 hours after surgery if pain is still present
 - For pain not relieved with Tylenol or your prescription medications, please call the office listed below.
- **PAIN SHOULD DECREASE BY 48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY, CALL BACK IF PAIN CONTINUES OR INCREASES**

4. Swelling:

- Swelling occurs in all wounds; this is your body's normal reaction to the surgery. Swelling may travel outward or downward from the surgical site. Swelling may not begin for 2-3 days following your surgery – this is normal.
- Surgery near the eye(s) may result in a black eye and the eye(s) may be swollen shut - this is normal.

5. Bleeding:

- Problems with bleeding rarely occur. Some post-operative bleeding on the bandage is normal. If significant bleeding is noted (a saturated bandage), apply direct pressure for 20 minutes. Stay calm and remember there are no major blood vessels in the area. If significant bleeding continues, call the office number listed on reverse side.

6. Numbness:

- Removal of skin cancer may involve the nerves. It is common to experience numbness in the area of the surgical site. It is common for numbness to travel outward from the surgical site. Normal sensations should return over a period of 12-24 months.

7. Infection:

- Infections rarely occur (less than 1-2% of cases). Signs of an infection include: fever, increased redness, increased pain, warmth, or pus draining from the wound. Infections most commonly occur 4-7 days after surgery. If you suspect an infection, please call

Restrictions

- Bending past the level of your waist.
- Lifting anything over 10lbs.
- Ibuprofen use, or any other NSAIDS medication for the first 24 hours.
- Extra cardiovascular work
 - Running, jogging, long walks, jumping, hiking, etc.
- General exercising/work out.
- Submerging under water until sutures are removed (swimming/baths).

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