

SKIN SURGERY AFTERCARE

1. Practice good hand hygiene - always wash your hands thoroughly with a diluted antibacterial soap (Hibiclens™ is good example of such a soap) before changing the dressing or touching your wound to apply medication. **IT IS ALSO IMPORATNAT TO WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER AFTER USING THE BATHROOM.** Take your antibiotics as directed until they are finished!
2. You can expect some bruising and swelling after your surgery. Apply ice packs for 5-10 minutes out of each hour directly over the bandage site while you're awake to reduce swelling and discomfort.
3. Please keep your surgical site elevated as much as possible. Relaxing in a recliner or sleeping on a couple of extra pillows at nighttime may be helpful to reduce swelling and pain.
4. Swelling is usually worse in the morning when you wake up. Don't get too concerned about this unless there is fever and pain at the site that does not improve during the day.
5. You can expect some discomfort when your local anesthesia wears off. Take your prescribed or over the counter pain medications for this purpose. Call our office if the medication does not take the edge off. Too much pain can raise your blood pressure and increase your chances for bleeding.
6. Leave your pressure dressing on for a full 2 days after your surgery and don't get this wet during this 2-day period.
7. After 2 days, you may gently remove the pressure dressing and get your surgery site wet. Let a mild soap and water run over the wound site. **DO NOT USE A WASHCLOTH or SCRUB the area.**
8. After wetting the area with a shower or bath, you may gently pat the wound dry and then apply a thin layer of vaseline or Aquaphor™ to the surgery site. Keep the wound covered. If steri strips are in place, you can place the topical ointment over the strips. Try not to remove your steri-strips. If they come off unintentionally, you can choose to replace them but it is critical not to intentionally remove these.
9. Remember to keep the wound moist with ointment! Keep the wound covered with a band-aid or gauze dressing day and night until you return to our office.
10. **DO NOT** do any bending over, stooping or lifting for the first 2 days after your surgery. Bending and lifting heavy items increases the blood pressure and may increase your risk for bleeding. You shouldn't lift anything heavier than a remote control or fork for the first 48 hours after your surgery.
11. If your pressure dressing becomes saturated with blood, try firm pressure and an ice pack for 30 minutes. If this does not slow down the bleeding, then call our office or proceed to the nearest emergency room.
12. **DO NOT** drink any alcohol or smoke for several days after surgery. Alcohol is a blood thinner and could increase your risk for bleeding
13. Please call our office if the wound becomes excessively red, inflamed, develops yellow-green drainage or feels warm to the touch.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE! *Dr. Harvey & Staff*