

INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIOPSY, SURGERY, OR WOUND SITE CARE

Excision/Mohs Surgery/Sutures Placed

- Do Not Shave over Sutures!

- Remove pressure dressing (white tape and pad) in 24 hours
- Leave the (brown) steri-strips on until you return for suture removal. If they fall off, apply a small amount of Vaseline, mupirocin, Bacitracin, Polysporin, or Neosporin to the wound. Keep covered with a Band-aid or non-stick Telfa pad. Continue to do this daily until returning for suture removal.
- Showering is allowed 24 hours after the surgery (after the pressure dressing is removed). Wash very gently around the surgery site.
- No swimming, hot tubs, or bath tubs allowed.
- Avoid activities/exercises/sports that involve movement of the surgery site for at least 2 weeks.
- Avoid activities/exercises/sports that raise your heart rate for the first 48 hours after surgery.
- If procedure near the eyes or on the forehead
 - Swelling and/or bruising (black eye) commonly appear 1-3 days after surgery. Okay to apply a cold pack (15 minutes on/15 minutes off) for 1-2 days after surgery.
 - Keeping head raised with pillows at night may help.
- If procedure on lower legs
 - Elevate legs when sitting and sleeping.
 - Wear support/compression stockings while awake.

Wounds without Sutures/C&D (curettage & electrodesiccation)/Scrape and Burn/Biopsy

- Daily, apply a small amount of Vaseline, mupirocin, Bacitracin, Polysporin, or Neosporin to the wound.
- Keep covered with a Band-aid or non-stick Telfa pad. Do **NOT** allow it to “air out” or form a scab.
- Continue to do this daily until the wound is fully healed. If a scab forms, it is not healed yet.
- Avoid activities/exercises/sports that raise your heart rate for the first 48 hours after procedure.
- Showering, bathing, and swimming is allowed.
- Allow 4-8 weeks (or longer) for lower extremities to heal. Wear support/compression stockings while awake if instructed to do so.

If bleeding should occur, apply 30 minutes of constant pressure with a clean gauze pad or dry cloth. If that is not effective, call the office. **IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL AND SPEAK TO ONE OF THE MEDICAL ASSISTANTS AT: (561) 487-7575.**

INFORMATION ABOUT SURGICAL WOUND HEALING

Everyone heals by permanent scar formation. Scar tissue is red for 3-6 months or longer, then usually fades to white. Sunlight exposure may cause a scar to darken. Therefore, strict protection from the sun is important. Blood vessels (telangiectasias) can form around a wound. A change in feeling (sensation) often occurs around a scar as well.

The appearance of a surgical scar usually continues to improve for 6-12 months as the scar “matures.” The tissues around the surgical site often remain swollen for about one month. The strength of the surgical wound slowly increases over time: less than 10% of normal skin strength has been regained in the first 7-10 days after repair, about 20% at 1 month, and about 60% after 4 months. Wound strength never exceeds 70-80% of normal skin strength. Therefore, it is especially important to limit body movement in the area of the surgery during the first month after surgery. If a surgical site is injured before healing is complete, the scar may gape open, the wound may bleed, and the scar may become more obvious.

Scars overlying active muscle areas tend to widen (stretch) with time. This cannot always be prevented. Scars can heal thick (keloid or hypertrophic scar) or can heal thin (atrophic scar). How they heal depends in part on their location on the body and the healing characteristics of the patient. The final appearance of a scar can never be guaranteed.