

Closed Wound Care Instructions - 1 Week After Surgery

- 1) One week after surgery, the flat bandage covering your wound should be removed (*either by our staff at the office or by you at home*). Wash hands with soap and water before handling your wound.
- 2) Gently clean the surgical site with plain tap or soapy water and apply a layer of ointment (**Aquaphor Ointment** (preferred), Vaseline Petroleum Jelly, or Bacitracin Ointment). A Q tip can be used to apply this ointment. Do **NOT** use Neosporin.
- 3) Cover the site with a sterile **non-stick** pad and paper tape. A Band-Aid can also be used to cover the wound. If you use a Band-Aid, please make sure it is large enough to cover the entire wound. Do **NOT** use regular gauze.
- 4) Repeat the above steps (ie. wash, ointment, and bandage) **twice a day** until the wound no longer has any open areas or scabs (**at least 1 to 2 weeks**). Keeping the wound moist will expedite the healing process. Do **NOT** let the wound dry out.

THE WOUND HEALING PROCESS

*Once the bandages are removed, the scar will be red and firm (especially in the lip/chin area). This is normal and will fade in time. It might take 6-12 months for this to happen.

*Massaging the area will help the scar soften and fade quicker. Begin to massage the area 4 to 6 weeks after surgery. To massage, apply pressure directly and firmly over the scar with the fingertips and move in a circular motion. Massage the area 10 times a day for 30 seconds. Repeat until the scar is no longer firm.

*Approximately 6-8 weeks after surgery it is not uncommon to see the formation of “tender pimple-like” bump along the scar. This is normal. As the scar continues to mature and the stitches underneath the skin begin to dissolve, this might occur. Do not pick or squeeze, this will resolve on its own. Should one break open producing a small amount of drainage, apply ointment (Aquaphor Ointment (preferred), Vaseline Petroleum Jelly, or Bacitracin ointment) a few times a day until the wound is completely healed.

*Numbness, itchiness and sensitivity to temperature changes can occur after surgery. It might take 12-18 months for the feeling to return to normal. During this time, sensations of itchiness, tingling and occasional sharp pains might be noted. These feelings are normal and will subside once the nerves have completely healed.