

## Closed Wound Care Instructions (Dry) – Day of Surgery

### How to care for your wound:

- Keep the pressure bandage (upper bandage) in place for 24 hours (*unless otherwise instructed*). If the pressure bandage becomes blood-tinged or loose, reinforce it with gauze and paper tape.
- Apply gentle pressure over the pressure bandage for 10 minutes every hour for the next few hours. (*Refer to page 2 for management of bleeding*).
- Remove the pressure bandage in 24 hours (*unless otherwise instructed*). You will see a flat bandage underneath. Leave the flat bandage in place until your follow up appointment next week (*or until you change the bandage yourself at home in 1 week*).
- Keep the flat bandage dry. Wash around it carefully and gently pat dry.
- If the flat bandage becomes soiled or starts to come off, reinforce it with additional paper tape. (*Note: If the bandage completely falls off and stitches are visible, clean the area with plain tap or soapy water, apply ointment (Aquaphor Ointment (preferred), Vaseline Petroleum Jelly, or Bacitracin) over the stitches and cover with a non-stick pad and tape or a Band-Aid. If you use a Band-Aid, please make sure it is large enough to cover the entire wound. Repeat twice a day until your appointment.*)
- If you require medication to control pain, you may take Extra Strength Tylenol. Icing for 10 - 15 minutes every 2 hours can also help with pain. If Tylenol (and ice) does not provide relief after 2 - 3 hours, you can take Extra Strength Advil. However, Advil is a blood thinner so it is preferable to start with Tylenol first and only add Advil if necessary. If adding Advil to Tylenol provided relief, continue to take both medications together. Refer to the instructions on their containers for frequency and daily limit.
- It is normal to have swelling and bruising around the surgical site. The swelling and bruising usually peaks at 48 hours after surgery and then subsides in approximately 10 - 14 days. Elevate the area to reduce swelling if possible. Icing for 10 - 15 minutes every 2 hours can also help with swelling. (*Note: For surgery performed around the eyes such as the **cheek, nose, and forehead**, you may develop bruised and/or swollen eyelids*).
- Note: If the surgery was performed on your **chin and/or lip(s)**, try to keep this area as immobile as possible. Try to minimize smiling, laughing, and yawning, as these stress the sutured wound. Eat soft foods for the first 24 hours and take small bites of food for 3 weeks. When brushing your teeth, you should use a child's toothbrush or use mouth wash to prevent stretching of surgery site. Please do this for 3 weeks.

*Please go to page 2 for information on restrictions and addressing possible complications*

### **Restrictions**

- No strenuous activity for **1 week** following surgery (*unless otherwise instructed*). Strenuous activities include those that elevate your heart rate or blood pressure (ie. running, biking, weight lifting, etc).
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages for 48 hours. Alcohol is a blood-thinner.
- Do not smoke for 3 weeks. Smoking is detrimental to wound healing.
- Do not go swimming for 1 month following surgery to prevent infection.
- There are no dietary restrictions.

### **Addressing Possible Complications**

#### **Bleeding:**

1. Leave the bandage in place.
2. Use tightly rolled up gauze or a cloth to apply direct pressure over the bandage for 20 minutes.
3. Reapply pressure for an additional 20 minutes if necessary.
4. Call the office or go to the nearest emergency room if pressure fails to stop the bleeding.
5. Use additional gauze and tape to maintain pressure once the bleeding has stopped.

#### **Pain:**

1. Post operative pain should slowly get better, never worse.
2. A severe increase in pain may indicate a problem. Call the office if this occurs.