

## **Skin Graft Wound Care Instructions - 1 Week After Surgery**

- Remove the bandage in 24 hours and begin wound care as follows (*remember to wash your hands with soap and water before handling your wound*):
1. Clean area with plain tap or soapy water using a Q tip or gauze pad. Do not let the shower water directly hit the delicate graft.
  2. Dry the area with a Q tip or gauze pad.
  3. Apply a layer of ointment (**Aquaphor Ointment** (preferred), Vaseline Petroleum Jelly, or Bacitracin Ointment) to the graft. A Q tip can be used to apply this ointment. Do **NOT** use Neosporin Ointment.
  4. Cover the site with a sterile non-stick pad and paper tape. A Band-Aid can also be used to cover the graft. If you use a Band-Aid, please make sure it is large enough to cover the entire graft. Do **NOT** use regular gauze.
  5. **Repeat wound care twice a day for 3 full weeks.**

### **Supplies Needed:**

Q tips or gauze pads  
Aquaphor Ointment, Vaseline Petroleum Jelly, or Bacitracin Ointment  
Non-stick pads and paper tape or Band-Aids

*It is an old wives tale that a wound heals better when it is exposed to air and allowed to dry out. The wound will heal faster with a better cosmetic result if it is kept moist with ointment and covered with a bandage. **Do not let the wound dry out.***

- Do not smoke for 3 weeks; smoking is detrimental to wound healing and may cause the graft to die.
- Avoid prolonged exposure to extremely cold temperatures for 3 weeks.
- Numbness, itchiness, and sensitivity to temperature changes can occur after surgery and may take up to 18 months to normalize.