

Skin Graft Wound Care Instructions – Day of Surgery

How to care for your wound:

- Leave the entire bandage in place until you come in for follow up in 1 week. If the bandage becomes blood tinged or loose, reinforce it with gauze and tape. *(Refer to page 2 for management of bleeding).*
- Keep the bandage dry. Wash around it carefully and gently pat dry.
- 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).*

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.

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

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.