SUNCOAST
SKIN SOLUTIONS
"Undoing the sun's damage"

POST SURGERY WOUND CARE

We offer convenient wound care kits containing all the supplies you need to care for your surgical site at home. These kits make it easy to follow proper wound care and support optimal healing. Ask our staff how to purchase one today.

Please note: Your surgeon may have provided you with detailed after-care instructions at the end of your appointment that are specific to your procedure. If so, please follow those instructions, as they are tailored specifically to your individual care.

Wound Care for Sutured Sites

Your wound will be covered with a bulky pressure dressing immediately after surgery.

Keep the dressing clean, dry, and intact for 48 hours. After 48 hours, remove the dressing and begin wound care **1–2 times per day**, depending on drainage.

Instructions:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your wound.
- Clean the wound and surrounding skin with warm, soapy water using a soft cloth, gauze, or Q-Tip.
- Apply a generous amount of Vaseline or Aquaphor (or prescription ointment if given) using a clean Q-Tip or gloved finger.
- Do NOT use hydrogen peroxide, Neosporin, Polysporin, Bacitracin, or triple antibiotic ointments—they can impede healing.
- Cover the wound with a non-stick gauze pad (Telfa), paper tape (Micropore), or bandage.

Dissolvable Sutures: These naturally dissolve over about 12 days or more. If they haven't dissolved or become bothersome after 2 weeks, contact our office.

Non-Dissolvable Sutures: These will be removed at a scheduled suture removal appointment. Continue wound care as directed until they are removed and new instructions are provided.

Phone: 844-SUN-DERM or 844-786-3376 OR visit us on our website: suncoastskin.com

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Wound Care for Open Wounds (not sutured)

Your wound will heal by "second intention," meaning it will heal over by itself without the aid of stitches or wound closure. This **process generally takes 8-12 weeks minimum**, depending on the size of the wound. During this period, the following instructions will allow you to keep the wound clean while promoting the healing process. Please have patience while it heals over.

- Redness, swelling, and tenderness are NORMAL physiologic responses in wound healing.
- After 1-2 weeks, you will notice a white substance (called fibrin) covering the wound base. Do not be alarmed, as patients often mistake this as a sign of infection. Fibrin deposition acts as the body's "natural glue" in wound closure and is completely normal.

Keep the dressing clean, dry, and intact for 48 hours. After 48 hours, remove the dressing and begin wound care **1–2 times per day**, depending on drainage.

Instructions:

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- Clean the wound and surrounding skin with warm, soapy water using a soft cloth, gauze, or Q-Tip.
- Apply a generous amount of Vaseline or Aquaphor (or prescription ointment if given) using a clean Q-Tip or gloved finger.
- Do NOT use hydrogen peroxide, Neosporin, Polysporin, Bacitracin, or triple antibiotic ointments—they can impede healing.
- Cover the wound with a non-stick gauze pad (Telfa), paper tape (Micropore), or bandage.

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What to Expect After Surgery

- Mild swelling and bruising is normal, typically peaking 1–2 days after surgery and gradually improving.
- Tenderness, tightness, and mild discomfort at the surgical site are normal.
- *For face or scalp surgery*: bruising and swelling may appear around the eyes.
    - Surgeries near the eye or lip will result in considerable swelling which can take 1-2 weeks to fully resolve. Keep head elevated.
- *For lips or mouth surgery*: avoid hot foods/liquids for 2–3 hours and eat soft, cold foods. Be careful when brushing teeth.
- *For arm or leg surgery*: keep the limb elevated whenever possible to reduce swelling.
- It is recommended to apply ice or cold packs to the surgical site, eyes and/or lips for 10-15 minutes at a time, repeating every 1-2 hours.
  Do NOT get your bandage wet.

Activity and Restrictions

- Rest and take it easy for the first 48 hours. Avoid heavy lifting, vigorous exercise, or straining.
- Walking is encouraged, but gradually increase duration, not intensity.
- *Head/Neck Surgery*: avoid bending at the waist for 48 hours; bend at the knees instead. Keep elevated, do not lie flat.
- Do not drink alcohol for 2 days post-surgery.
- For best results and optimal wound healing, do not smoke for 2 weeks.

Pain Management

- Mild pain is expected for a few hours to a few days.
- Pain may be managed with Tylenol (Acetaminophen).
- Sharp or worsening pain should be reported immediately.

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Bleeding and Drainage

- Mild bleeding or drainage is common the first few hours or days.
- If bleeding soaks through the dressing:
  - Remove the dressing and apply direct pressure with a clean cloth for 20 minutes without checking.
  - Apply ice and gauze while maintaining pressure.
  - If bleeding continues after **two 20-minute cycles**, call the office immediately.

Infection

- If prescribed, take antibiotics as directed. Report side effects (rash, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting) to the office.
- Call the office if you notice:
  - Increasing redness, warmth, or tenderness
  - Fever ≥100.4°F
  - Pus or foul-smelling drainage

Provider Availability

- An on-call provider is available after hours for urgent matters. **Please do NOT go to the ER or consult any other physician unless speaking to our office first.**
- Call the office immediately for bleeding, severe pain, signs of infection, or any concerns about your wound at **844-786-3376**.