

Post-Operative Wound Care Instructions

- **Sutures** (stitches) need to be removed in the office in _____ days.
- A small amount of bleeding for the first few days is normal. **If bleeding is excessive or soaks through the bandage, remove the bandage, place gauze over the site and apply firm constant pressure over the area for 20 minutes without "peeking"**. If this does not control the bleeding, call our office. We may recommend the use of QR (Quick Relief) powder, which is over-the-counter. In the rare event you cannot reach us, you may go to the nearest emergency room.
- **For sutured procedures:** If pain, apply an ice bag for 15-20 minutes every 2 hours. Keep the area elevated. For surgery of the head or neck, avoid stooping or bending, and sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows. **LIMIT ACTIVITY**. Anything that increases your heart rate will increase your risk of bleeding, pain and infection. **No alcoholic beverages for 48 hours after surgery.**
- **Wound Care:** After 48 hours, remove the original dressing. Then cleanse the wound as follows once daily:
 1. Wash your hands.
 2. Clean the wound gently with soap and water then pat dry.
 3. Apply Vaseline (or mupirocin if it was prescribed) ointment to the wound.
 4. Cover with a new dressing or Band-aid.

For sutured wounds, continue this procedure until sutures are removed. For open wounds, continue this procedure until the wound has healed with a new overlying layer of skin. Avoid hydrogen peroxide and other "home remedy" treatments.

You may take a shower after 48 hours. Be sure the force of the water does not hit directly on the sutures. Do not take tub baths.

If you have sutures, then unless you are instructed otherwise, it is important that you **do not engage in strenuous activity or exercise for 2 weeks after surgery**. After 2 weeks if any activity causes a tugging or pulling sensation at the wound site, immediately discontinue and restrict yourself from that activity. (At 2 weeks after surgery the scar has only 15% of its final strength.)

Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol should be sufficient for pain. Other types of pain relievers can cause increased risk of bleeding or swelling. However, if you were prescribed a pain medication to take after your surgery, follow the instructions exactly. Do not drive while you are taking the medication. Completely avoid all alcoholic beverages. The medication may make you drowsy or impair your judgment, so do not operate any equipment or perform any potentially dangerous tasks while you are taking the medication. CALL our office if you are concerned about any side effect you may be experiencing.

If the area develops signs of infection (increasing redness, swelling, warmth, increased pain or a thick white, yellow, or green drainage) or if you develop fever or chills, please notify us.
- It is not unusual for there to be a bruise around the wound site.
- Wound healing continues for up to one year following surgery. It is not unusual to experience itching, tingling, numbness or pain in the scar from time to time during this interval. If the pain becomes severe or the scar thickens, you should notify the office. A slight amount of redness in a scar is expected for the first six months. After six months, the redness usually subsides and the scar should soften. The color difference becomes less noticeable with time. If there are any problems, return for a post-op surgery check at your earliest convenience.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS CALL OUR OFFICE

Phone 610-566-7300