

SURGERY AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

For any questions, please call (713) 487-8233 during normal business hours. In the event of an emergency after hours, please call Dr. Downing at (407) 232-3952. If your call is not returned within 1 hour, please go to your nearest emergency room.

1. Leave the initial bandage on for 24-48 hours.
2. After removing the dressing, wash the area **once daily** with antimicrobial soap (such as Dial soap or other) and water. Please use an unscented soap.
3. Begin using the vinegar soaks. See directions for soaking below. Do this **twice daily** for 1 week, then **once daily** or as needed for 1 week, then you may discontinue.
4. Remember to keep the surgery site protected with Vaseline, Aquaphor, or antibiotic ointment if directed by our team. Do this **twice daily** following the vinegar soaks.
5. If there is any bleeding, apply firm pressure for 20 minutes to the area. If this does not stop the bleeding, please apply firm pressure for another 20 minutes. If this does not stop the bleeding, please call the number above.
6. While it is normal to experience some swelling and bruising around the surgical site, these steps can minimize it:
 - a. **Periodically apply an ice pack to the skin surrounding the surgical site** – 10 minutes on 10 minutes off at least 5 times a day. Please note swelling is usually the worst on the 3rd day post procedure. Continue icing for 5 days post procedure.
 - b. **Face or scalp:** sleep in a recliner or with your head elevated on at least two pillows for 2-3 days after surgery. Do not bend over for 3 days.
 - c. **Hand:** keep arm in sling for 3 days.
 - d. **Lower leg or foot:** keep your leg/foot elevated to level of your heart when sitting more than 15 minutes.
7. If any excessive bleeding, redness, opening of the wound occurs or excessive swelling occurs, please let our staff know.
8. Special instructions:

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- **Do you take aspirin?** If you do, we ask that you not take the aspirin for 48 hours unless your family doctor or cardiologist feels you should continue it. You may take Tylenol Extra Strength or Norco (if prescribed). It is **not** necessary to discontinue blood thinners (i.e., Coumadin, Plavix).
 - **Do you drink alcohol?** If you do, we ask that you not drink alcohol for 24 hours.

DIRECTIONS FOR VINEGAR SOAKS

Mix 1 tablespoon white vinegar with 1 pint warm water to make solution. With a soft cloth or gauze, soak affected area for 15 minutes with dilute vinegar solution. After each soak, apply Vaseline, Aquaphor, or antibiotic ointment if directed by our team. Repeat twice daily for one week, then once daily or as needed for one week. Then you may discontinue.

AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SKIN GRAFTS

Graft Site:

1. Keep the area **DRY** until next appointment. This means while showering or bathing, the area needs to be completely covered.
2. Keep original bandage on. If it comes off, cover with a light non-stick pad and tape.
3. Return to scheduled appointment in one week to have the bolster dressing removed.
4. **Please get the dressing very wet before coming to appointment (i.e. in the shower)**
5. If wound is on your
 - o **Face or scalp:** sleep in a recliner or with your head elevated on at least two pillows for 2-3 days after surgery. Do not bend over for 3 days.
 - o **Hand:** keep arm in sling for 3 days.
 - o **Lower leg or foot:** keep your leg/foot elevated to level of your heart when sitting more than 15 minutes.

Graft Donor Site

Type 1: Your graft donor site was closed with sutures. The bandage can be removed after 24-48 hours. Please follow instructions on page 1 for taking care of this site.

Type 2: Your graft donor site was left open to heal via granulation. Please see instructions below.

AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR GRANULATION

It has been decided that the best option for healing your wound is to let it granulate which is to heal naturally without stitches. We have placed an occlusive dressing over a silver dressing over your wound. The film dressing should remain in place for 3-4 days or until it falls off on its own. The best way to care for this dressing is to cover it while showering. This bandage can get wet, but we like to keep it covered to reduce the chance of the bandage filling with water. After the bandage is removed begin washing the area with antimicrobial soap, then utilize the vinegar soaks (see above), pat dry, apply Vaseline/Aquaphor then cover area with Duoderm (cut piece to size a little larger than area to allow it to adhere to surrounding skin). Perform the wound care described above for 2-3 weeks then let the area dry to a scab and leave it alone. Please call our office with any concerns over the progress of the healing of your wound. Granulating wounds will take weeks-months to heal.