

## MOHS SURGERY AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

For any questions, please call 713-487-8233 (Cypress) or 281-677-3091 (Magnolia) 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 prescription 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 still does not stop the bleeding, please call the number above.
6. The following steps can minimize swelling and bruising around the surgical site:
  - Periodically apply an ice pack over the bandaged surgical site.
  - **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.
  - **Hand:** keep arm in sling for 3 days, if directed by our team.
  - **Lower leg or foot:** keep your leg/foot elevated to the level of your heart when sitting for more than 15 minutes.
7. If any excessive bleeding, redness, swelling, or opening of the wound occurs please let our staff know.
8. On the day of surgery, we will inform you if your stitches will dissolve or if you will need to return to our office to have them removed.

9. 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 PCP or cardiologist feels you should continue it. You may take Tylenol Extra Strength or Norco (if prescribed) for pain. 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** of white vinegar with **1 pint** of warm water to make the 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

### Surgical Site

#### Week 1

1. Keep the area **DRY** until your next appointment. This means while showering or bathing, the area should be completely covered.
2. Keep the 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 the appointment (i.e. in the shower)**
5. If wound is on your
  - **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.
  - **Hand:** keep arm in sling for 3 days, if directed by our team.
  - **Lower leg or foot:** keep your leg/foot elevated to the level of your heart or when sitting for more than 15 minutes.

#### Week 2 - 4

1. Wash daily with antimicrobial soap using a Q-tip to gently roll over wound.
2. Apply Vaseline/Aquaphor to wound and keep covered with a light non-stick pad and tape.
3. Return for scheduled wound checks.

### 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 a silver dressing with a transparent film dressing (Tegaderm) on the wound with an additional pressure bandage and gauze on top. After 24-48 hours the pressure bandage and gauze can be removed. The silver dressing with a transparent film dressing (Tegaderm) underneath should remain in place until it falls off on its own, but no more than 7 days. On the face this may only stay on for 1-2 days but on the lower leg it may stay on for 5-7 days. 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 film dressing is removed, please follow these instructions:

1. Wash the area **once daily** with antimicrobial soap (such as Dial soap or other) and water. Please use an unscented soap.
2. Begin using the vinegar soaks (see previous page for instructions). Do this **twice daily** for 1 week, then **once daily** until the wound is healed.
3. Remember to keep the surgery site protected with Vaseline, Aquaphor, or prescription antibiotic ointment if directed by our team until it completely heals. Do this **following the vinegar soaks**. We do not want the wound to "dry out" or form a scab, as this increases healing time and chance of infection.
4. Place a hydrocolloid bandage or Duoderm bandage (easily found online or at any drug store) over the Vaseline or Aquaphor. This should cover the wound completely and stick to a small area of normal skin surrounding the entire wound. The bandage should be changed each time you clean the wound.
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 below.

Granulating wounds will take **weeks-months** to heal.