

Post-Operative Instructions for Second Intention

Your wound is going to be healing in on its own. This means the wound must heal from the inside out, and will take 6-8 weeks or longer to do so.

It is very important that the wound be covered with an airtight bandage at all times and to keep it moist to promote healing. A dried crust, scab or a yellow base of the wound is undesirable and may actually slow down the rate of healing, increase the risk of infection and worsen the final appearance of the scar.

The first few days after surgery, your wound may not look like it is healing or changing at all. Usually the first sign of healing is a slight increase in pink color at the wound edges. This is due to growth of new blood vessels to supply the wound with the cells necessary to promote healing.

In the first few weeks, you can expect a large amount of drainage from the wound. This helps to keep the wound moist. The bottom of the wound should be pink. Sometimes a white or yellow material is seen in and around the bottom of the wound. This is usually not a sign of infection but part of the healing process. Signs of infection would include heat in the area (warm to touch), pain, redness, increase in drainage or swelling. If you have signs of infection, please notify your doctor.

Gradually the wound will fill up to be level with the surrounding skin edges. It will then contract in size and heal from the edges. The process is slow and requires patience.

Supplies

- ****Compression stockings should be worn for wounds below the knee****
- Warm tap water
- Gauze or washcloth for soaking
- Vaseline
- Non-stick bandage pads (e.g. Curad Non-Stick Pads, Band-Aid First Aid Covers Non-Stick Pads)
- Absorbent gauze pads
- Paper tape

Wound Care:

1. Keep the pressure dressing dry and intact for 48 hours after surgery.
2. After 48 hours you may remove the bandage to shower and begin dressing changes.
3. Wash your hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap, or use hand sanitizer, before and after each dressing change.

4. The wound needs to be soaked at least once per day. This can be done before or after bathing. Apply a soaking wet, warm washcloth or gauze to the open wound. Let it sit on the wound for 15 to 20 minutes. After soaking, gently wash away any loose debris from the area. If the wound begins to bleed, apply firm pressure for 15 minutes. This should stop the oozing.
5. If you notice the wound is getting a build up of yellow in the base, begin soaking twice per day.
6. Putting on the bandage: Apply a large amount of Vaseline to the wound. Place a non-stick pad (e.g. Curad or Band-Aid) on top of the Vaseline. You may need to trim the non-stick pad to better fit the area. Add a layer of gauze to the top of the non-stick gauze pad to absorb drainage. The amount of padding may need to be adjusted according to the amount of drainage. Tape all edges of the wound to make an airtight bandage. You may need to trim or shave any hair around the wound so the tape will stick.
7. Bleeding is rare, but if it should occur, lie down and apply firm pressure to the site for 15 minutes by your watch. DO NOT lift pressure to check on bleeding until 15 minutes have passed. If the bleeding is continuing despite your efforts, you are not pushing hard enough or the pressure is not being exerted in the right area. If bleeding continues, call the office (856) 596-0111 immediately. If it is after hours, you will speak with the person on call. You may be instructed to return to the office or to the nearest emergency room.
8. Most patients have mild or minimal pain after the procedure. For this you may take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol) as directed on the package. AVOID products containing ibuprofen (e.g. Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (e.g. Aleve) for at least 48 hours following the procedure.
9. Cigarette smoking constricts blood vessels and inhibits wound healing. It is recommended that you do not smoke during your healing time.

If you have any questions or are concerned about your wound, please call the office at (856) 596-0111, text us via Klara at (856) 481-7851, or message us on our website at www.hmgderm.com