

WOUND CARE

Leave the dressing on for 24 HOURS after your procedure and keep it dry.

- After 1 day, wash your hands with soap and water and then remove the dressing.
- Once removed, gently clean the area with soapy warm water. Use a fragrance-free soap. Do not scrub the area. You may shower at this time. Do not allow the shower to hit the site directly
- Pat dry. pressure
- Apply a thin layer of ONLY VASELINE / PLAIN PETROLATUM to the surgical site once daily to prevent scabbing until the stitches are dissolved, removed or the wound is healed. Do not let the wound “dry out” - it will heal best in a moist environment. Do not use Polysporin.
- Cover with a non-stick dressing or Band-Aid
- Do this care once a day, every day for 2 weeks (or longer if still crusted/not fully healed)
- Do not submerge your wound in water (no bathing, swimming or hot tubs)

If your wound is left open to heal without stitches (healing by second intention/granulation), be sure to apply a thick layer of Vaseline two to three times per day. Do not let the wound dry out or form a dry scab. It is normal for the wound to drain clear to yellow fluid for the first few days.

BLEEDING

It is not uncommon and normal to have mild bleeding and oozing after the surgery. Apply constant, direct and firm pressure to the bleeding site for 45 minutes. If bleeding continues, hold pressure for another 30 minutes. If bleeding persists, please call the clinic. If you cannot get through, go to the emergency room. Don't use your nicest bedding and clothes for 2 days after surgery in case you have any bleeding.

SWELLING AND BRUISING

It is very common and normal to have swelling and bruising around the surgery site and this usually lasts 1 week. To help with swelling and mild discomfort, you may apply ice to the surgical

site for 10-15 minutes every hour (while awake) for the first 3-4 days. This is especially important if your surgery is on the cheeks or nose as swelling around the eyes is quite dramatic and tends to be delayed, peaking around day 3 or 4. Be sure to wrap the ice in a clean, dry cloth so the dressing does not get wet.

PAIN

Pain should be minimal. If needed, take extra strength Tylenol (1000mg) every 6-8 hours for relief. You can also take Advil 600mg every 6-8 hours (unless there is a medical reason you cannot take NSAIDs/ibuprofen such as taking blood thinners, kidney problems etc). Stagger your Advil and Tylenol doses (i.e. one drug every 4 hours). Alternatively, both medications can be taken at the same time safely, if needed.

REST

Rest is very important after surgery. You should not do any heavy lifting, bending or vigorous exercise for 1 week. Limit activities that get your heart rate or blood pressure elevated. This is to minimize the tension placed on your stitches and optimize the aesthetic result. No swimming for two weeks.

INFECTION

A small red area around your incision is a normal reaction and does not necessarily indicate infection. If you experience signs of infection such as fever, chills, sweats, increased redness that is spreading beyond the incision line, swelling, warmth, drainage of pus or worsening pain to touch, call the clinic.

SMOKING

Please refrain from smoking as this will slow your healing and negatively impact the appearance of your scar.

WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

Your wound may feel tight, itchy or numb and this will gradually improve over the next months. As scars heal, they often look red, raised and bumpy. It takes 12-18 months for a scar to “mature” and achieve the final cosmetic result. Every month the appearance and feeling will continue to improve gradually.

Normal sensation typically returns by ~6 months. As nerves regenerate, it is normal for the area to feel numb, and itchy, and you may experience a crawling sensation or sharp shooting pains. In some cases, the area remains permanently numb.

Although every effort will be made to offer a suitable cosmetic result, the surgery will result in a scar. The scar can be minimized by the proper care of your wound.

As your incision heals, small white or pink “pimple-like” bumps in the skin along the incision may appear within the first 3-12 weeks. These are spitting sutures (internal dissolvable stitches that are rejected by your body before they can completely dissolve). If you notice a small suture

poking through the skin, try to gently remove it with tweezers or trim it flush with the skin using scissors. These spitting sutures can cause swelling, redness, pus, oozing and sometimes look like a pimple. This is normal and will eventually go away on its own over a few weeks to months.

SUNSCREEN

Wait until the wound is fully healed before applying sunscreen directly onto it, about 2-4 weeks after your surgery. Once your wound is healed, apply sunscreen directly onto the scar and your entire face with SPF30+ and wear a hat. Scars and skin grafts exposed to sunlight can turn a brown colour that is very visible and permanent. This can be avoided by applying sunscreen to the scar diligently.

MASSAGE

You can start massaging the scar once it is fully healed, 4 weeks after surgery. The pressure will help break down, soften and remodel the stiff, newly formed scar tissue helping it become smoother, softer, flatter and more flexible. Massage or knead the scar in firm circular motions for 5-10 minutes once to twice daily.

SCAR REDUCTION PRODUCTS

Several products are available to help reduce the appearance of scars. Silicone-containing scar gels and sheets are the most effective. If you choose to try any of these products, wait until the wound is fully healed (which is typically 2-4 weeks after your surgery) and use as directed on the packaging.

WILL YOU DEVELOP MORE SKIN CANCERS?

After having one skin cancer, statistics say that you have a higher chance of developing a second (unrelated to the first, in other sun-exposed areas). The damage that your skin has already received from the sun cannot be reversed. However, some precautions can be taken to prevent further skin cancers. You should apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or greater every single day to your face, neck and ears. You should also apply on sun-exposed areas if you are going out. A wide-brimmed hat, long-sleeve shirt, other protective clothing and sunglasses are also appropriate. Avoidance of excessive sunshine is recommended.