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Dermabrasion

What is Dermabrasion

Dermabrasion is a skin-resurfacing procedure that removes the outer layer of skin. The skin that grows back is usually smoother. It can be used to decrease the appearance of scars from surgery.

During the procedure

The area is numbed with a small needle then cleansed before the procedure. During the procedure, the doctor moves a sterile rough pad across the skin with constant, gentle pressure. This removes the outer skin layers. The procedure takes 10-20 minutes, depending on how much skin is being treated.

You may be prescribed Valtrex 1g twice a day for 7 days to prevent infection - your doctor will tell you if you need to take this (it is a prescription medication to prevent re-activation of the cold sore virus). Start this the morning of the procedure.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

For post-operative questions/concerns Monday-Friday between 7am and 2pm, please call 613-761-4069 and ask for the Mohs nurse.

FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY, call 613-761-4221 and ask for the Dermatology Resident covering Mohs.

Aftercare Instructions

After dermabrasion, treated skin will be covered with a moist, nonstick dressing. Keep this dressing on for 24 hours. Afterwards, rinse the skin gently with a soapy water or a dilute vinegar mixture (2 cups of water with 1 tbsp of vinegar). Pat the area dry and apply a thick layer of vaseline. Cover with a bandage for 3 days. It is normal to have quite a bit of oozing for 3-4 days.

The treated skin will be red and swollen. It might ooze blood or a yellowish liquid. You'll likely feel some mild burning, tingling or aching. As you are healing, the growth of the new skin might be itchy.

A scab or crust will form over treated skin as it begins to heal. Keep the crust MOIST with vaseline - do not let it dry out. This increases the risk of adverse scarring.

To relieve pain after the procedure, take prescribed pain medication or an over-the-counter pain reliever, such as aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) or naproxen sodium (Aleve, Anaprox DS, others).

No swimming for 3 weeks. No vigorous exercise or heavy lifting for 1 week.

It may take up to 3 months for the redness to resolve. Once the skin completely covers the healed area (usually 7-10 days), you should start using a daily sunblock to prevent permanent skin color changes (preferably one that contains more than 10% zinc oxide) and cosmetics to conceal any redness.

Concerns for Infection

If your treated skin appears to be getting worse -- becomes increasingly red, painful, hot to the touch, drainage of pus, blisters or if you develop fevers, chills or sweats, this might be a sign of infection and you should contact our office to be seen.