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Facial/Skin Lesion Excision Post Op Information

Dressings

You may have tapes across your incision. If this is the case please leave them in place for one week at which point you can remove them. If they fall off please just apply a thin layer of Vaseline to the incision 3 times/day up to 2 weeks post excision. If you do not have tapes please apply Vaseline to the incision 3 times/day.

Showering

It is okay to shower 36 hours after your surgery right over the tapes or the incision. Just pat it dry after the shower. Please do not submerge the incision for one week for instance in the bath.

Pain

Please take Tylenol extra-strength or your prescribed medication, if you have been given one, starting 2 hours after surgery and regularly over the next 36 hours even if you do not have any pain. Once pain starts if is very difficult to stop.

Bleeding

It is not uncommon to have some amount of bleeding after surgery, particularly as the local anesthetic wears off. If you have had a facial excision we recommend using an old pillow case or putting a towel down before you go to sleep.

If you have bleeding elevate the area above your heart (if possible) and apply firm pressure for 30 minutes continuously. This can be with your hands or by lying on a rolled up towel using your body weight. This will stop most bleeding. If it persists beyond 2 attempts please contact the office or if the bleeding is quite heavy go to the emergency department.

Sutures

Your sutures are dissolving and do not need to be removed. They usually dissolve within 3-4 weeks.

If you were informed that your sutures are none dissolving, we will need to see you in one week for removal unless you have been instructed otherwise.

Activity

Please avoid physical activity for the first 48 hours after surgery such as the gym, moderate or vigorous cardio, or heavy lifting. You can go for walks and go about the rest of your daily activities normally.

What to watch out for

Some redness around the incision as it heals is normal. This is due to increased blood flow. The top layer of palmar skin often sheds as well.

If pain is increasing after 3-4 days associated with redness and swelling that is not improving over 10-12 hours these are signs of an infection. You should call the office, your family practitioner or present to emergency if the first two options are unavailable.

Scar management

Starting 3 weeks after surgery (once your incision is completely healed) its time to start massaging the scar. Do this 3-4 times a day for 1-2 minutes with firm pressure. A drop of lotion may help.

Topicals for minimizing scarring and improving color/texture are available through the office and should be started at 3 weeks. Ask Dr. Chambers or one of his staff to help you with choosing what's right for you.

Care moving forward

If you have had a cosmetic excision sun protection is important at the excision site for the next 6 months to prevent the scar from becoming dark. This is best in the form of protective clothing (ideally with UV barrier) and sun screen. We recommend a mineral based sun screen – these provide better complete protection and can be applied less frequently. As an added bonus they are better for the environment if you will be in and out of the water.

If this excision was for skin cancer sun screen and protection is even more important for prevention of further lesions. Most skin cancers are a result of sun exposure. Although this is mainly sun exposure from many years ago it is important to have good protection moving forward.

Ask Dr. Chambers or one of the staff about our mineral based sun screen available in the office.