

POSTOPERATIVE WOUND CARE

The importance of postoperative care to your surgical site cannot be over-stressed. The care you take of your surgical wound is extremely important to the success of the procedure. There are several things that could happen following surgery:

1. **Bleeding:** Bleeding can occur following surgery. To reduce the possibility of bleeding:
 - a. Limit activities for at least 24-48 hours. Anything that raises your heart rate or blood pressure can increase your risk of bleeding.
 - b. Keep the operative site elevated (if appropriate).
 - c. If the surgery was on the face, head or neck:
 - i. avoid stooping, bending, or straining
 - ii. sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows

Should bleeding occur, apply firm, consist pressure on the bandage for 20 minutes!!! This will usually stop minor bleeding.

2. **Swelling:** Swelling occurs because surgery has caused a wound and your body reacts to that injury. To reduce swelling that may occur:
Apply an ice bag for 20 minutes each hour during the waking hours the day of your surgery. If you do not have an ice pack, a “baggy” filled with cracked ice and wrapped with a thin towel will do nicely (keep your bandage dry).
3. **Pain:** Postoperative pain is generally slight. In nearly all cases, Extra Strength Tylenol will relieve any pain you may experience.

4. **Infection:** Infection seldom occurs when the wound care instructions have been carefully followed.
Signs of infection are: Increased pain, swelling, redness or yellowish drainage several days after surgery. If any of these signs should occur, contact our office. Redness and itching can also be a sign of allergic reaction to antibiotic ointment or adhesives. If this occurs, stop the antibiotic ointment or stop using bandaids with adhesive.

DAILY WOUND CARE

1. Leave dressing on and do not get it wet for 24 hours
2. Clean wound daily with mild soap and water and pat dry.
3. If scabs or crusts develop around stitches, apply a mixture (1:1 mix) of water and hydrogen peroxide gently to the wound with a Q-tip to remove them.
4. Apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly (Vaseline). This is available without a prescription.
5. Apply a Band-Aid that fully covers the wound site or a non-sticky wound dressing such as Telfa with medical paper tape.

** If you have not heard from our office within 2 weeks regarding your pathology results, call our office at **425-454-1104**

There will be a scar and redness after surgery. The redness will decrease with time and should be expected to last as long as six to twelve months afterwards. Avoid physical activity that pulls or stretches in the surgery site until the wound is healed. There is some evidence that keeping a piece of paper tape on the scar for two to three months after the sutures are removed can improve the final appearance of the scar.

NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY OF BLEEDING THAT WILL NOT STOP, SIGNS OF INFECTION, TEMPERATURE GREATER THAN 100°F (38°C), SEVERE NAUSEA AND VOMITING, OR LARGE SWELLING PRESENT UNDER THE SUTURE.

OFFICE NUMBER: 425-454-1104