



MEDICAL + AESTHETIC DERMATOLOGY

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## Post-Surgical Wound Care

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

1. **Bleeding:** Bleeding can occur following surgery. To reduce the possibility of bleeding, the following instructions are given:
  - a. Limit activities for at least 24 hours
  - b. Keep the operative site elevated (if appropriate)
  - c. If surgery was on the face, head or neck:
    - i avoid stooping or bending
    - ii. avoid straining to have a bowel movement
    - iii. sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows

**Should bleeding occur, apply firm constant pressure on the bandage for 20 minutes. That will usually stop minor bleeding.**

2. **Swelling:** Swelling occurs because surgery has caused a wound and your body reacts to that injury. To reduce the amount of swelling that may occur:
  - a. Apply an ice bag for 20 minutes each hour during the waking hours. If you do not have an ice bag, a "baggy" filled with cracked ice and wrapped with a thin towel will do nicely.
  - b. Keep your bandage dry.
3. **Pain:** Pain, postoperatively, 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.

### Wound Care - Two Times Each Day

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.

2. Apply Hydrogen Peroxide and water (half and half) to suture line with cotton ball or Q-Tip to remove crusts from wound.
3. Dry wound thoroughly with clean soft cloth by blotting.
4. Apply thin layer of antibiotic ointment with Q-Tip.
5. Cover with clean dry dressing.

**Signs of infection are: Increased pain, swelling, redness or yellowish drainage several days after surgery.**

There will be a scar and redness in the scar after surgery. This will decrease as healing progresses but redness should be expected as long as six months. Everyone heals differently and the final scar appearance depends on the individual's ability to heal. In other words, some scars heal and can hardly be seen while others become thick and/or tender. Because of the unpredictability in wound healing, the final appearance cannot be preoperatively ascertained, therefore, no guarantees can be implied or stated as to the final appearance of the scar.

**Special Instructions:**

1. Limit activities for at least 24 hours
  2. Keep head or surgery site elevated
  3. If bleeding occurs, apply constant, firm pressure: call if bleeding doesn't stop
  4. Apply ice bag for 20 minutes of each hour during waking hours on operative day
  5. Take Extra Strength Tylenol if pain is present
  6. Follow instructions for wound care
  7. Notify our office immediately should bleeding that will not stop or signs of infection occur.
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