

SANTA BARBARA SKIN INSTITUTE

Skin Graft Wound Care

Bandaging:

- Leave the bandage in place until you come in for follow up in one week. If the bandage becomes blood tinged or loose, reinforce it with gauze and tape, **Do not remove it.**

(Refer to the reverse side of this page for management of bleeding).

- Keep the bandage dry and intact until your follow-up appointment. Wash around it carefully.
- Avoid getting the bandage wet until the day of your follow-up appointment.
- On the day of your follow up, shower and let the bandage get thoroughly soaked prior to coming in to your appointment. Do not remove the bandage, we will remove it in the office. If the bandage starts to fall off, do your best to keep it in place.
- The site will be rebandaged on the day of your follow-up appointment. The new bandage should remain dry and intact for another week.
- If your bandage begins to fall off before your follow-up appointment, we would like you to apply ointment around the edges for your bolster daily until the follow-up appointment. We recommend Aquaphor, Vaseline, or Polysporin ointment. We do not recommend Neosporin ointment as some people may be allergic.

Restrictions:

- No strenuous activity for 48 hours. Resume moderate activity in 48 hours. No heavy exercising, no lifting objects above 15lb, and no bending over until you are seen for a follow-up in 1 week.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages for 48 hrs.

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- Do not smoke for 3 weeks; smoking is detrimental to wound healing and may cause the graft to die.
- Avoid prolonged exposure to extremely cold temperatures for 3 weeks.

Pain:

- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol) as needed for pain after surgery, most people don't experience any pain after the first or second day post-surgery.
- Do not take ibuprofen (Advil, Aleve) for 24 hours after surgery. Okay to resume after 24 hours.
- It is normal to have swelling and bruising around the surgical site. Elevate the area to reduce swelling. Applying ice to the area 15 minutes every waking hour can also help to reduce swelling.
- Post operative pain should slowly get better, never worse.

If you develop bleeding, follow these steps:

1. Your bandage may become blood tinged or loose, reinforce it with gauze and tape. Leave the bandage in place. **Do not remove the bandage** even if there is bleeding.
2. Use tightly rolled up gauze or a cloth to apply direct pressure over the bandage for 20 minutes.
3. Call the office or go to the nearest emergency room if pressure fails to stop the bleeding.

For any questions or concerns, call our office at (805)770-3999

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