



## Skin Graft Discharge Instructions

### Activity

- Limit activities for at least 24 hours. You may resume regular activity after the stitches are removed, unless otherwise noted.
- If possible, keep operative site elevated above heart level.
- Avoid stooping and bending at the waist.
- Avoid straining to have a bowel movement.
- Sleep with head and shoulders on extra pillows.
- If you are on prescription pain medication or have bandages and/or swelling that impacts your vision, do not drive. Do not operate machinery or equipment that require alertness.
- Wash hands before and after wound care with antibacterial soap.

### Wound Care

- Leave the bulky white pressure bandages on for 48 hours after surgery.
- Do not disturb the yellow bolster bandage on top of the skin graft.
- Keep the yellow bolster bandage out of water and moist with petrolatum based ointment, like Vaseline or Aquaphor.
- Notify our office if the yellow bolster bandage comes off.
- The skin graft donor site will have brown tape over the sutures. **Do not remove the brown tape.** You may wash that area as normal, but do not submerge the area under water. If the brown tape comes off, wash that area with antibacterial soap and water and cover with white petrolatum ointment (like Vaseline or Aquaphor) twice a day.

### Pain Control

- Local anesthesia will wear off in 1-3 hours. The area may burn, throb, feel tender or sore, but should not be excruciatingly painful. Take Extra Strength Tylenol (Acetaminophen) or Advil (Ibuprofen) if needed for pain, following instructions on the bottle.
- Please call our office if you have any severe pain.

### Bleeding

- If bleeding occurs through the bandage, remove the bandage and apply a dry, compressed washcloth to the area. Use **firm, constant pressure for 20 minutes without peeking.** If the bleeding has stopped, re-dress the site with white petrolatum ointment, nonstick dressing, and paper tape.

### Swelling

- Swelling may increase for the first 3 days before it starts to get better. Applying ice packs 20 minutes per hour may reduce the amount of swelling.

### Expected Postoperative Changes

- The surgery site may be red for approximately 6 weeks, lumpy because of deep sutures for 4 months, and numb for up to 2 years.

**Approximate Bolster/Suture Removal Time Frames**

- Face and neck: 6-7 days
- Scalp: 7 to 14 days
- Trunk and extremities: 10-12 days
- Hands, feet, lower legs: 14 days

**Call us Immediately at 772-403-2227 if You Experience Any of the Following:**

- Bleeding not controlled by pressure
- Increase in pain after there was little or none
- Fever over 101 F
- Thick, yellow, or greenish drainage
- Red streaks from the site
- Increased redness, warmth, hardness, or swelling of the operative site