

Wound Care Instructions

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- **If you have STERI-STRIPS on the wound:**
 - After 24 hours, you can take off any white outer bandages (do **NOT** remove the Steri-Strip that is adherent to the wound).
 - The wound does not need to be dressed with ointment or covered by a bandage after this. It is okay for the Steri-Strips to get slightly wet with daily showering, however try to avoid sustained direct water contact. Do not scrub the wound. Do not submerge the wound in a tub or pool. Use a clean towel to pat the Steri-Strip dry or use a hair dryer over it for a few minutes. If it appears that there is consistent moisture beneath the Steri-Strip or if it becomes detached from the wound, removed the Steri-Strip and call the office. The Steri-Strip will normally stay in place for 1-2 weeks unless removed.
- **If you have VISIBLE SUTURES or a HEALING OPEN WOUND:**
 - After 24 hours, you can take off any white outer bandage coverings and gently wash over the wound area with mild soap and water while showering every day. For scalp wounds, use a mild shampoo like baby shampoo. Do not scrub the wound. Do not submerge the wound in a tub or pool. Wash your hands before each dressing change.
 - Apply Vaseline petroleum jelly to the wound twice every day to keep the wound moist while healing. You can use Bacitracin or any generic equivalent antibiotic ointment for the first few days if you desire. Long term antibiotic ointment (Neosporin, etc.) can cause skin irritation. Keep the wound covered by a bandage (if possible based on the location) while the sutures are in place. This will keep the wound clean and prevent it from drying out, while also protecting your clothing from any potential drainage. This also helps to keep UV light off the wound during the healing phase which can cause more visible scarring. Keep the dressing clean and dry at all times. If the dressing gets wet, change it.
 - Do **NOT** use hydrogen peroxide, alcohol, or steroid (cortisone) creams.
- **If you have DERMABOND on the wound:**
 - The wound does not need to be dressed with ointment or covered by a bandage. It is okay for the wound to get slightly wet with daily showering, however try to avoid sustained direct water contact. Do not scrub the wound. Do not submerge the wound in a tub or pool. Use a clean towel to pat the wound dry or allow to air dry. The Dermabond usually peels off in 7-10 days. Do **NOT** use any ointment, hydrogen peroxide, alcohol, or steroid (cortisone) creams.
- **For all wounds:**
 - Pool, lake, ocean, and hot tub water are sources of infection and should be avoided until stitches are removed.
 - Rest the surgery site and do not perform activities that could potentially traumatize or stress the wound. If applicable, keep the wound elevated during the first few days to reduce swelling.
 - *Normal symptoms:* A small amount of bleeding or spotting from the wound is common during the first several days. Gentle pressure should stop any bleeding. Bruising, numbness, and itching around the sutures are also often experienced. It is normal for the wound to be pink and slightly raised during the healing process.
 - **Notify the office if there are any signs of infection.** This includes increased redness around the wound, increased pain, warmth, swelling, pus drainage, or fever.
 - **Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, Aleve, or alcohol for 48 hours as these increase your risk of bleeding. Take Tylenol for pain if needed.**
- **After suture removal:**
 - Although the sutures are typically removed within the first ten days, the wound is still in the early phases of healing and very delicate. *The wound will not reach its maximum healed strength for several months!*
 - After suture removal, protect the area from the sun with sunscreens or a bandage for the next 6-12 months to prevent darkening of the scar. It can take a year or more for the scar to fade.
 - *Be patient, the appearance of the wound will improve over time.* Call the office if you develop thickened, raised, or abnormal scarring. This can occur months after the procedure.

Please call the office (704) 896-5556 if you have any questions or concerns!

Dr. Miles can be reached on his cell phone (704)728-2787 outside of normal business hours.