

## INTRODUCTION

Excision of skin cancer and the repair of the associated skin defect is a procedure performed either in our office or at an outpatient hospital. A local anesthetic (injection), sedation and/or general anesthesia may be utilized, depending on the size and reconstructive needs.

## POSTOPERATIVE CARE

### Pain Control

You may experience mild to moderate pain for a few days following the excision of the skin cancer lesion and repair of the defect. For most of the minor procedures we do, over the counter pain medications like Tylenol or Advil should help you manage the discomfort.

For larger procedure, Dr. Lewis may prescribe a prescription pain medication. This prescription medication is usually Norco, which is a hydrocodone and Tylenol combination. While taking this prescription medication, do not take additional Tylenol, the day after surgery you may begin taking NSAIDS, like Advil or Aleve. Please make sure to take this prescription medication with food as nausea may occur if you do not.

### Steri Strips

Steri Strips are small pieces of surgical tape that help support the wound as it is healing. A larger dressing will be placed over the steri strips, this dressing can be removed the next day and will not need to be replaced unless there is drainage from the wound. Leave the steri strips in place until they fall off or until your return visit. If the ends of the steri strips begin to curl up, do not pull them as you could open the wound, snip the ends off with some scissors. The sutures underneath the steri strips will dissolve over time.

### Skin Sutures

If there are sutures on the skin, blue or black, they will need to be removed 5-14 days after the procedure. The point in time that these sutures are removed depends upon the location of the incision on your body.

### Incision Care

- Shower or cleanse the incision with soap and water daily.
- From a new jar, you should apply Vaseline ointment to the incision two to three times a day, just enough to keep the incision moist.
- If there is a scab or crust on the incision, clean the incision using a Q-tip dipped in a mixture of equal parts hydrogen peroxide and tap water.
- If there is no scab or crust, you should not use this hydrogen peroxide mixture. Only apply the Vaseline after cleaning the wound.
- Bandages are usually needed for areas under clothes, in part to protect your clothes from the ointment that is applied to the incision. For areas on the head or neck, bandages are not needed unless you prefer to use them.

### Bathing

You may shower the day after the procedure, you will need to remove the bandage after showering. Do not scrub the incision site or use a razor over the incision. No swimming or using a hot tub until the sutures are removed or prior to your two week follow up appointment.

### Activity

In most cases, you may resume normal activity the day of surgery. Dr. Lewis will give you more specific limitations if needed. Direct physical contact to the surgical site, except what is needed for wound care, should be avoided.

## FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS

If your surgery is scheduled to be done in our office, your follow up appointment will be scheduled before you leave the office that day. If the surgery is to be done under anesthesia in an outpatient facility, you will need to call our office the day after the procedure to schedule your follow up appointment.

PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE:

- Increasing swelling underneath the wound
- Fever greater than 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Purulent discharge (pus) coming from the wound
- Increasing redness around the wound

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Please do not hesitate to ever contact our office

**804-267-6009**

