



GORDON LEWIS, M.D.

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SKIN LESION POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

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.

Steri Strips

Steri strips are small pieces of surgical tape that help support the wound as it is healing. The sutures underneath the steri strips will dissolve over time. Leave the steri strips in place until they fall off or can be removed 2 weeks post procedure. 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. 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.

Skin Sutures

If there are sutures on the skin, blue or black, they will need to be removed _____ 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 unless the incision is on the lower leg.
- From a new jar, you should apply Vaseline/Aquaphor ointment to the incision twice daily 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.
- 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.
- For swelling, elevate extremity above heart level as much as possible.
- Bruising and swelling in moderation is normal

Bathing/Showering

Remove the bandage before showering. Do not scrub the incision site or use a razor over the incision. No swimming or soaking until the sutures are removed or two weeks after your procedure.

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.

Pathology

Pathology results do populate into the patient portal. We will call with pathology results 5-10 days after your procedure. If you have not heard from us please feel free to call our office 804-267-6009.

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.

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

Please do not hesitate to ever contact our office **804-267-6009**