

Wound Care – Skin Graft with Bolster Dressing

1. Don't remove the bandage from the **graft site**. Leave it for the entire week. Do not get the bandage wet.
2. The first dressing change of the **donor site** is in **48 hours**. Change the dressing and clean the donor site every day until you return to our office to have your sutures (stitches) removed, unless directed otherwise. Wash with antibacterial soap and water. **DO NOT** use peroxide or alcohol. Cover the area with a dressing consisting of Vaseline®, a non-stick gauze (such as a Telfa® pad), and paper tape.
3. Expect some swelling, redness, pain, and/or tenderness around the wound. It should slowly go away within a few days. Pain is usually worse in the first 24-48 hours. Swelling is usually at its worst 2-3 days after surgery. If redness, swelling, and/or tenderness last for more than 4-5 days or gets worse, contact our office – it could be signs of an infection.
4. If your wound is on your face: Keep your head elevated on 2 pillows. **DO NOT** bend over, lift more than 10 pounds, or participate in strenuous activity. **Keep your head above your heart.**
If your wound is on your leg: Keep your leg elevated while sitting. Wear support hose and walk occasionally to keep blood moving through your legs. Follow these instructions for at least 48 hours. No aerobic exercise or weightlifting for 2 weeks.
5. Use ice packs to control swelling and bruising. Apply ice for 10-15 minutes every hour for the first 24-48 hours, while awake. (Frozen bags of peas or corn also work well.)
6. Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) every 4-6 hours as needed for discomfort. **DO NOT** take more than 3 grams (3000 milligrams) of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period. If needed, take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, such as ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) or naproxen (Naprosyn®, Aleve®) according to the package instructions. **Avoid aspirin** and products containing aspirin, such as Excedrin®, for 48 hours after surgery. **Please note: If you are given a prescription pain medication, it may contain acetaminophen (Tylenol®). If you are taking one of these prescription medications, avoid taking additional acetaminophen.** Please check with the clinical staff before taking your own pain medications.
7. If bleeding occurs, apply firm, uninterrupted pressure with clean gauze for 20 minutes. You can do this up to 3 times, but if the bleeding does not stop, please call the office or the after-hours emergency number below. **Do not go the emergency room without calling the office first.**
8. **Call the office if you have a fever over 100.4°F (38.0°C)** or if swelling, redness, and/or tenderness at the surgical site last for more than a few days. These could be the symptoms of an infection.
9. If your doctor prescribed an antibiotic for you, please take it until it is all gone. If you have any side effects (rash, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea), call the office.

Continued on back

10. No bending, lifting anything heavier than 15 pounds, or strenuous activity while you still have stitches in place. Wait 2 weeks before doing any aerobic exercise or weightlifting.
11. It is very important that you return to our office for a wound check and to have your sutures removed. This appointment will be within 7-14 days.

Questions or Concerns?

Center Hours: Mon-Fri, 8a.m. – 5p.m. Please contact the Dermatology Center at **716-845-3378** and choose option 4.

After hours, weekends, and holidays: You can reach Roswell Park 24/7 at **716-845-2300** or toll free at **1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355)**. Our Call Center and nurse triage staff will assist you.