

Primary Wound Care Instructions

1. Keep the dressing dry for 48 hours.
2. The first dressing change is in 48 hours. Gently remove the old dressing. Your wound can now be washed carefully with antibacterial soap and water. With a Q-tip apply Vaseline® or Aquaphor® healing ointment to the incision and cover with a Band-aid® big enough to cover the incision line. You can use Telfa non-stick gauze and paper tape instead of a Band-Aid. Wash the wound and change the dressing every day. **Make sure the jar or tube of ointment is brand new.**

Why not Neosporin or Polysporin? Up to 1 out of 5 people will have allergic reactions to these products when used regularly. Multiple research studies have shown that these products do **not** have a lower rate of infection compared to Vaseline. **Do not use peroxide or alcohol. Use only soap and water as directed.**

3. Expect some swelling, redness, pain, and tenderness near the wound. Should gradually get better in a few days. Pain is usually worse in first 24-48 hours. Swelling worse 2-3 days after surgery.
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 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.**

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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 the doctor prescribes an antibiotic, take it until it is all gone. If you have any side effects (rash, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting), call the office.
10. Please keep your appointment for either suture removal or a wound check.

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.