

# Discharge Instructions: Wide Local Excisions and Skin Grafts

## What To Expect

- You may have a sore throat after the procedure because of the breathing tube used during surgery. This will go away over the next few days.

## Wound Care

- You will have a large dressing (bolster) over the surgical site, and a dressing over the donor skin graft site.
- Do not remove the large bolster dressing. Do not remove the dressing from the donor skin graft site (usually located on the upper chest or thigh).
- You may bathe, however, try to keep the bolster from getting saturated, and keep the donor site dressing as dry as possible.
- It is normal to have a small amount of oozing from the incision or the skin graft donor site for the first 1-2 days. You may ooze reddish-colored fluid, especially if you take a blood thinner like aspirin, warfarin, or Xarelto™, but you should not have fresh bleeding like you'd see with a deep cut.

## Pain Control

- We will provide you with a prescription for opioid pain medication such as hydrocodone with acetaminophen (Norco®), oxycodone with acetaminophen (Percocet®), or oxycodone (Oxycontin®). Take it every 4-6 hours if you are having pain. If opioid medications are too strong, you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol®). You may take ibuprofen (Advil®/Motrin®) after the first 1-2 days. Follow the instructions on the bottle.
- If you take an opioid medication that contains acetaminophen, **do not take additional acetaminophen. The maximum daily dose of acetaminophen is 4000 milligrams.** Check all medication labels. Acetaminophen may be an ingredient in over-the-counter and prescription medications.

## Recovery

- The area where you had surgery will be sore for several days.
- You may be hoarse or have a sore throat for a few days.
- Do not lift anything that weighs more than 5 pounds and no strenuous activities for 3 weeks.
- Do not drive (or operate heavy machinery) if you are taking opioid pain medication.
- You can gradually return to your normal activities after 2 weeks, as tolerated.

## Call Us If...

- you have bleeding that does not stop after you apply pressure on the area
- you develop severe, uncontrolled pain at the site of your surgery
- the area around the incision or biopsy site becomes inflamed or reddened or has increased drainage
- you have a fever of 101°F (38°C) or higher

Call the Head and Neck Center at **716-845-8186**. The center is open Monday – Friday, 8am – 5 pm. After hours, your call will be answered by our Call Center. You can also call Roswell Park 24/7 at **716-845-2300**.