



## Postoperative Care Instructions

### SUPPLIES:

Hydrogen Peroxide  
Tap Water  
Gauze Pads  
Q-Tips  
Dressing Supplies – Band Aids or Telfa Pads and Medical or Paper Tape  
Ointment (Vaseline or Aquaphor)

### PRESSURE DRESSING:

The large bulky pressure dressing applied after surgery is very important and should remain in place for 24-48 hours. If the dressing loosens before then, re-tape it. Keep the dressing dry.

### WOUND CARE:

Following the removal of the pressure dressing, wound care should be performed two times a day to promote rapid and favorable healing.

1. Wash hands with antibacterial soap.
2. In a clean container, mix small, equal amounts of hydrogen peroxide and tap water.
3. Using a dry gauze pad or Q-tip, wipe the wound dry.
4. Using a clean Q-tip dipped in the hydrogen peroxide mixture, gently loosen any crust, scabbing or healing debris from the stitches. **DO NOT** saturate/pour/soak the wound with the mixture.
5. Dry the wound.
6. Use a clean Q-tip to spread a thin layer of ointment along the stitches. (Whitening of the skin indicates ointment overuse)
7. If covered with ointment, the surgical site may be left uncovered while at home. When going out, going to bed or if exposure to trauma, chemicals or dirt is likely, cover the wound with a small dressing. Band aids, Telfa pads or gauze may be used as best suited to the surgical site. Clean scissors with alcohol prior to using on dressing materials.
8. While stitches are in place, showering and bathing may be performed but the surgical site should **NOT** become wet in the process. Protect the area with a dry towel, plastic bag, or thickly applied dressing. If the area gets wet, remove any bandages or tape immediately, pat dry and perform wound care (i.e. peroxide, ointment). Reapply bandage if applicable.

### PAIN:

Postoperative pain is typically the worst as the anesthetic is wearing off (2-6 hours after surgery). After this period, postoperative pain is usually mild to moderate. Tylenol (Acetaminophen), regular or extra strength, a full dose taken as directed on the package usually relieves any discomfort adequately when combined with ice application. For sensitive surgical sites or larger procedures, recent studies have shown that staggered doses of ibuprofen and Tylenol (full doses per bottle directions) is most effective for pain control. Alternate the medications at 3 hour intervals (i.e. ibuprofen @ 10AM, Tylenol @ 1PM, ibuprofen @ 4PM, Tylenol @ 7PM) for best results. **DO NOT** take Aspirin or Aleve, as these thin the blood and may lead to bleeding. **IF THESE MEDICATIONS ARE REGULARLY TAKEN FOR OTHER HEALTH REASONS PLEASE CONTINUE THEM AS NORMAL.** If the pain is severe and not relieved with Tylenol or staggered Tylenol & ibuprofen doses, please contact our office.

**SWELLING/BRUISING:**

Some swelling and bruising is to be expected and may continue to increase for 72 hours. Remember both tend to be pulled down with gravity and may affect areas of loose skin distant from the surgical site (eye, jaw line, fingers). To minimize these, elevate the surgical site above the level of the heart and apply ice (as much as possible) for the first 48 hours after surgery.

**APPEARANCE:**

The edges of the line may appear bright pink to purple and the edges of the wound may be reddened. Slight tenderness, firmness, swelling or numbness is normal.

**ACTIVITY:**

**DO NOT** bend, lift heavy objects (>10 lbs), or strain for 72 hours after surgery. These activities as well as strenuous or aerobic exercise increase the blood pressure and can promote bleeding. While the stitches are in place, avoid trauma to, sudden pressure or pulling of, or strenuous use of the surgical site. These can cause the wound to open. No swimming, submerging into, or soaking in water is permitted during this time. **DO NOT** drink alcoholic beverages for 72 hours after surgery, as this is a blood thinner and can increase bruising and may cause bleeding. It is also advised to discontinue or decrease tobacco use during this time to optimize healing.

**BLEEDING:**

Blood on the dressings or blood when cleaning the wound is **normal** for the first several days. If bleeding soaks the dressing or runs from underneath the dressing, using a dry, clean towel, apply firm constant pressure to the entire surgical site without removing the dressing. Pressure should be held for a measured 10 minutes. If bleeding continues, repeat this process. If after 20 minutes bleeding is still occurring, continue to hold pressure and contact our office (Mon -Thurs 8 AM to 5 PM and Fri 8 AM to Noon) or Dr. Stein on her cell phone if after hours.

**NERVE SYMPTOMS:**

The area may remain numb for several weeks or even months. You may also experience pulling or periodic sharp pains near the wound as it heals. Itching is also common, but if severe associated with a rash, please call the office.

**INFECTION:**

If you have been prescribed an antibiotic, finish the entire prescription. Increasing pain, spreading redness or swelling, heat or pus-like drainage from the surgical site are signs of wound infection. Please notify our office immediately if you recognize any of these symptoms.

**QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS:**

During normal office hours, most questions can be addressed by our medical assistants. Issues beyond the normal will be promptly forwarded to Dr. Stein. Our office number is 321-428-4545.

**DO NOT CONTACT DR. STEIN VIA TEXT AS THIS IS NOT A HIPAA COMPLIANT METHOD OF COMMUNICATING WITH HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS.**

**TEXTING WILL RESULT IN DISMISSAL FROM THE PRACTICE**

For **EMERGENCY** problems or questions on weekends or during the evening that cannot wait until the office reopens, please contact Dr. Stein directly on her cell phone: 321-626-7605. Please reserve the use of this number for true emergencies only (i.e. significant bleeding or pain or symptoms of infection).