



DERMATOLOGY & PLASTIC SURGERY OF ARIZONA

FULL-THICKNESS SKIN GRAFT WOUND CARE

Grafts depend on the blood supply from the base and edges of the wound for it to “take.” To help the new skin placed over the wound “take,” a firm tie-on dressing (AKA- Bolster) will be in place for the first week. Once removed, the graft will probably appear dark pink or bruised with crusting around the edges. The top layer of the graft may also peel off (like a blister roof). Each day the graft will continue to heal and lighten, becoming flesh colored, usually within a month.

Depending on the type of closure, physical activity may be restricted for one week or longer following Mohs Surgery. Please plan accordingly.

SUPPLIES:

- Q-tips
- ½ inch or 1-inch paper tape
- Non-stick dressing pads (i.e., Telfa)
- Vaseline, Aquaphor or Polysporin

APPEARANCE:

Graft- The skin graft is underneath the tie-on dressing (cotton ball tied with suture), which is under a Telfa and tape dressing. This tie-on dressing, which often becomes quite discolored, will be removed by the doctor or nurse one week following surgery. The skin around the graft may appear swollen and a little red the first week following surgery.

Donor Site- This is the area where skin has been taken to repair your surgical wound. It is stitched closed with sutures. A Telfa and tape dressing is on top of it.

WOUND CARE:

The top dressings (Telfa and tape) we apply after surgery should remain in place for 24 hours. If they become loose before then, re-tape them. After 24 hours, remove them.

Wound care should be performed two times per day.

Graft- Gently cleanse around the tie-on dressing with a Q-tip moistened with tap water. Dry and then apply Vaseline around the edges and on top of the bolster. Cover with Telfa and tape in place.

Avoid wetting or moving the dressing as it is keeping the graft below secured in place.

Donor Site- Cleanse the sutures at the donor site with tap water then dry. Apply Vaseline, Aquaphor or Polysporin to the sutures and cover with Telfa. Tape the dressing in place.

Do not wet the pressure dressings.

BATHING/SHOWERING:

You may shower and/or shampoo if you are careful to keep the stream of water from forcefully striking the surgery sites. Change the dressings after each shower.

If you notice redness, heat, swelling, white drainage and pain from either site, please call our office immediately. These are signs of infection.

BLEEDING:

Careful attention has been given to your wounds to prevent bleeding. The dressings you have on are pressure dressings and will also help prevent bleeding.

You may notice a small amount of blood on the edges of the dressings the first day; this is normal. If bleeding is persistent and saturates the dressing, apply firm, steady pressure over the dressing with gauze for 20 minutes. If the bleeding continues, repeat pressure again for 20 minutes. If bleeding persists, call the doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Room while continuing to hold pressure on the wound.

PAIN:

There will be mild to moderate discomfort for the first 24-48 hours following surgery. You may take two (2) acetaminophens (Tylenol) together with two (2) Ibuprofen every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. Ice packs are very helpful in reducing pain and swelling. They should be applied 10-20 minutes every hour.

NOTES:

DO NOT DRINK ANY ALCOHOL FOR 1 DAY AFTER SURGERY! Continue to take all other prescribed medications, restart supplements in 24 hours.

1. If the wound site is near the eye, saline eyewash may be used on an applicator to clean the corner of the eye and eyelids.
Make sure you clean your scissors with alcohol before each dressing change.
2. You may have a low-grade fever (99-100°F) for which Tylenol may be used.
You may have some clear drainage from the wound. This will stop after a few days. If not, please call the office.
3. **NO NICOTINE PRODUCTS OF ANY KIND DURING YOUR MOH'S PROCEDURE OR THE HEALING PROCESS. THIS INCLUDES SMOKING, VAPING OR SMOKELESS TOBACCO.** This causes blood vessels to constrict, impairing the healing process.

DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL WITH QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

During office hours (Monday- Friday, 8:00 am – 4:30 pm)

- In Sierra Vista call (520) 458-1787
- In Tucson call (520) 207-3100

After hours, holidays and weekends, to reach Dr. Moenster please call 520-231-7231 and leave a voicemail with your name, date of birth and phone number. Dr. Weyer cell 520-977-4747. Dr. Swanson please call 520-462-0530 and leave a voicemail with your name, date of birth and phone number.

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