



DERMATOLOGY  
ASSOCIATES OF ITHACA  
*Healthier Skin Since 1983*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the US (lifetime risk: 1 in 5), yet it is the most preventable.



More people develop skin cancer from tanning than develop lung cancer from smoking!



Central NY receives about 75% of San Diego's UV exposure, and Tompkins County ranks 8<sup>th</sup> highest in melanoma in NYS.



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# POSTOPERATIVE CARE

The importance of postoperative care to your surgical site cannot be stressed enough. How you care for yourself and your surgical wound(s) is extremely important to the success of your recovery. The information below explains how to care for your wound after your skin excision(s) with sutures.

## WOUND CARE

- A Nexcare™ or Tegaderm™ waterproof bandage has been applied to your excision site today; leave the bandage in place until your suture removal appointment. If it falls off or becomes saturated, replace it with a new waterproof bandage.
  - Note: Avoid use of topical antibiotics such as Neosporin®; this leads to a higher rate of contact dermatitis that will inhibit wound healing.
- Avoid activities that stretch the wound.
- You can shower after your procedure. Do not take a bath, go swimming, go into a hot tub or submerge your wound until the sutures have been removed.
- Limit activities that will increase your heart rate or blood pressure for at least 24 hours after your procedure.
- Keep the operative site elevated.
  - If the site is located on the face, head or neck, sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows.
  - If the site is located on the lower extremity make sure the site is elevated during down time (eg: watching tv, desk work, etc.)
- Should bleeding occur, apply firm, constant pressure on the bandage for 15-20 minutes. This will usually stop minor bleeding.

## GOOD TO KNOW

- Pain is generally slight. In nearly all cases, Extra Strength Tylenol® will relieve any pain you may experience. **Avoid taking medications that can thin your blood**, such as Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Motrin®, Aleve®, or Advil® unless your physician has prescribed them for daily use.
- You may apply an ice pack to your surgery site for 10 to 15 minutes on and off during the first 24 hours after your procedure.
- There will be a scar and redness after surgery. This will decrease as healing progresses, but redness should be expected for as long as six months. Everyone heals differently and the final appearance of the scar depends on the individual's ability to heal.
- Infection rarely occurs when wound care instructions have been carefully followed. You should call the office if there is severe inflammation, increased pain, swelling and/or yellow drainage or if a fever lasts more than 24 hours develops.
- Notify our office immediately should you experience bleeding that will not stop, or if you have signs of infection. The after-hours number to use, only in cases of emergency, is 607-527-0525.