

Jason R. Litak, M.D.

Fellow of the American College of Mohs Surgery

Santa Monica Dermatology

2001 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 990W

Santa Monica, CA 90404

(310)829-4484

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Go home and take it easy today. Avoid exercise and heavy lifting for the first 48 hours. Keep the wound elevated for the first two nights by not sleeping on that side of the body and by using extra pillows.
2. You may apply an ice pack over the bandage for 10 minutes every hour for the first evening. This will help with swelling, bruising, and pain. This is most important if your surgery was around the eye and/or on the face or head.
3. You may take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Aleve etc.), Tylenol, or your regular pain medicine for the soreness that is expected after surgery. The pain is usually at its worst at about 4 hours, and should get better by about 12 hours after surgery. Avoid alcohol for the first 24 hours after your surgery as it can increase the risk of bleeding.
4. Keep the initial bandage on for 48 hours, and keep it dry. If the bandage starts to become detached or soiled by drainage/bleeding, you may reinforce it with tape.
5. If you notice ongoing bleeding, apply constant firm pressure directly to the bleeding point using gauze or a clean cloth (hold without peeking for a full 30 minutes, and repeat). Applying an icepack is also helpful. You may need to remove the bandage if it becomes saturated, and to locate the bleeding point. Having someone to assist you with this process and to apply pressure for you is helpful. Once the bleeding is stopped, apply your own pressure bandage similar to the original.
6. After 48 hours, remove the bandage. The easiest way to remove the bandage is to get it wet in the shower. If steri-strips were used (small pieces of tape across the wound), leave them on until they fall off by themselves.
7. After the first 48 hours, gently cleanse the wound/incision daily with soap and water. (*For wounds on the ear or leg also cleanse with Domeboro astringent solution or a dilute solution of white vinegar and water*)

OVER

Jason R. Litak, M.D.

Fellow of the American College of Mohs Surgery

Santa Monica Dermatology

2001 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 990W

Santa Monica, CA 90404

(310)829-4484

8. After cleansing, keep the wound/incision covered with a layer of ointment and a covering of band-aids or non-stick Telfa pads until the surface sutures are removed or dissolve (one week if all of the sutures are under the skin), or until an open wound is fully healed. Change the band-aids daily. We recommend using any band-aid that fully covers the incision, or a non-stick Telfa pad secured with paper tape if the incision is too long for a band-aid. For ointment we recommend Vaseline (petrolatum), Polysporin (double antibiotic), or bacitracin.
9. Do not submerge the healing wound in water (bath, pool, lake) until the surface sutures are removed or dissolve, or an open wound is fully healed.
10. Avoid exercising or stretching the affected part of the body for the first week or until the surface sutures are removed or dissolve. *For leg wounds, minimize walking and elevate the leg.*
11. The skin in and around the scar may be bumpy as the sutures under the skin take 3-6 months to dissolve. After the incision is healed, massaging the bumpy areas briefly each day can help them resolve.
12. The scar will continue to improve for the first year. Protecting the area from the sun will help minimize scarring. Silicone gel sheets (available over-the-counter) can also help to minimize scarring.

Your follow-up over the next few weeks to remove sutures or to check on the status of your healing will be determined on an individual basis. Please make an appointment before you leave the office or call to schedule a follow-up. Do not hesitate to call the office at 310-829-4484. Dr. Litak would be delighted to see you at any time to check the status of your healing and to answer any questions you may have. For urgent surgical matters after hours, Dr. Litak is available via a paging service at this same number. In addition, Dr. Litak requests that you make an appointment for him to examine the site three months after your surgery.

Thank you for allowing us to take good care of you.