SKIN GRAFTED WOUND INSTRUCTIONS

Skin grafting is a surgical procedure where a piece of normal skin is removed from one area (donor site) and transplanted onto a surgical defect (recipient site) to provide restoration of normal skin contour.

MATERIALS NEEDED
Mild anti-bacterial soap (Lever 2000, Dial, Dove etc)  Cotton tip applicators or Q-tips  Vaseline or Polysporin
Non stick dressing pads  Gauze pads  1/2” or 1” paper tape
Scissors

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CARE OF SKIN GRAFTED AREA (RECIPIENT SITE)
A special pressure dressing was placed over your skin graft. This was designed to stay in place for 1 week so that you have no wound care for this site for the first week.
1. If this bandage becomes loose then apply more tape to the outside of the bandage and tape it back down. The first 2 days is the most important period for a skin graft to have pressure. Do not worry if your dressing comes loose after the first 2 days. If you have any questions call our office.
2. YOU SHOULD NOT GET THIS BANDAGE WET UNTIL YOU RETRUN TO OUR OFFICE. For some patients this means no showers. A bath is an alternative for most patients. You can also have some wash your hair if your site is on the head or neck.
3. You should expect some mild drainage from the wound to stain the edge of the bandage. If you experience more than this call our office.
4. The skin grafted area may vary in color from white to dark purple. Do not be concerned at this time with color variance; NEVER attempt to remove crusting from wound surface. Ideally you won’t even see the skin graft for this 1st week.

PROCEDURE FOR CARE OF SUTURED AREA (DONOR SITE)
1. Remove the bandage in 24 hours.
2. Gently clean around stitches with mild soap and water applied with a Q-tip. Dry with a fresh Q-tip or pat dry with gauze.
3. Apply small amount of Vaseline or Polysporin to suture line.
4. Cover with strip of non-stick dressing cut to size. Secure with tape.
5. This dressing can be changed as often as necessary, but once daily is usually sufficient.
6. DO NOT GET AREA WET FOR 24 HOURS
7. If your wound edges begin to pull apart or open or if you experience excessive bleeding, drainage, pain, swelling, redness, or fever then call our office or Dr. Viehman after hours.
8. Avoid strenuous activity for at least two weeks following surgery.

What to Expect:
1. After your surgery you can expect some discomfort from the surgical site. This is highly variable among patients and is also dependent upon the location of your surgery. Some areas are more sensitive than others. You may receive a prescription pain medication to help alleviate post surgical discomfort. Always start with extra strength Tylenol first if you can take Tylenol. If your pain is not adequately relieved or if you are having severe pain then you should call our office immediately or Dr. Viehman after hours. Avoid any aspirin containing products CAUTION: (Bufferin, Anacin, Goody Powders, Excedrin and B.C. Powders all contain aspirin products.)
2. After surgery you should expect some mild swelling and redness around the surgical site. Some areas of the body tend to swell more than others (around the eyes). In many cases the swelling is a side effect of the numbing medication used during surgery. This is particularly common on the forehead. If you feel your swelling or redness is abnormal please call our office.
3. A low grade fever (99-101) for which any NON-ASPIRIN product may be used. Tylenol is recommended.
4. Mild drainage from the wound which may have a foul odor and be yellowish in color. This is especially common on the legs. The yellow drainage is NOT a sign of infection.
5. Significant bleeding is unlikely but can occur. If you experience bleeding then lie down and apply firm, constant pressure to the surgical site for a minimum of twenty minutes. If bleeding continues, repeat the pressure on the surgical wound for an additional twenty minutes. Do not “peek” during this period. If the bleeding persists then please contact our office as early as possible during the day so that we may make arrangements for your evaluation. If you are unable to reach our office or Dr. Viehman then please proceed to the nearest emergency room for evaluation and assistance. Call 911 for severe problems.
6. Ice packs may be placed over the wound dressing during the first twenty-four hours. The ice pack is placed over the wound for fifteen minutes and may be repeated four times per day. You may also use a bag of frozen peas in substitution for an ice pack.
7. Please contact this office or your local doctor if you have excessive bleeding, swelling, redness, fever or pain.
8. The donor site will take approximately two weeks to heal. Redness is common and may persist for months. This will eventually resolve.

Please contact our office or your local M.D. should you experience excessive bleeding, redness, swelling, fever or pain.
Further questions can be addressed through our office at 910-256-2100. Our normal business hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 7:30am – 5:00pm and 7:30am – 1:00pm on Wednesday and Friday.