



PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS AFTER SURGERY

Rest as much as possible the first 3 days after surgery. Do not do any lifting, straining, or exercise for 3 days. This will minimize the risk of bleeding.

Swelling is common and can be lessened by use of an ice bag, a blue-gel cooler pad, ice cubes or a frozen washcloth in a plastic bag. Leave the dressing in place. Use ice for 20 minutes every 2 hours for the first 8 to 10 hours (or until bedtime) on the day of your surgery.

You will have a bulky pressure dressing on the surgery site. You may remove this dressing after ____ day(s). Beneath this dressing you will find the incision with stitches. Soap and water (or shampoo) during a shower is usually all that is necessary for daily wound cleaning. If a thick black crust forms over the site, use hydrogen peroxide with a cotton ball to gently remove this crust.

Surgery Site Care:

After cleaning the surgery site, coat with a thin layer of:

- Polysporin antibiotic
- Vaseline (petroleum jelly) or Aquaphor
- Bactroban (prescription required)

Do Not Use Neosporin or Triple Antibiotic Ointment

After applying the above ointment, either:

OPTION 1 (*best option*):

Cover the area with new dressing (gauze and tape or bandage) and change daily as above until follow-up. Do not let the wound "air out," as this will promote pain, infection, thick crusting, and poor healing/scarring.

OPTION 2 (*wounds near the eyes, on the lips, or scalp where bandages are difficult*):

Reapply a thicker amount of the above ointment 4 to 5 times per day.

This essentially provides the same air barrier to reduce pain, infection, crusting, and poor healing/scarring.

For Pain:

Many patients do not require any medication. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) should be considered first (see doses below). In some cases, you may be given a prescription for a narcotic pain reliever. These contain acetaminophen (Tylenol) as well. Do not take additional acetaminophen (Tylenol) together with any prescription medication. Do not wait until pain builds up. Take pain medication at the first hint of discomfort. Do not take aspirin or aspirin-containing pain relievers, such as ibuprofen/NSAIDs, as they may cause bleeding.

- acetaminophen (Tylenol): 2 extra strength 500 mg tablets (or 2 to 3 regular strength tablets) every 6 hours
- Tylenol #3: 1 to 2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed (prescription required)
- Vicodin: 1 to 2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed (prescription required)
- Percocet: 1 to 2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed (prescription required)

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Infection Risk:

Sometimes infection risk is deemed high enough that an oral antibiotic is prescribed. Reasons include larger repairs; sites around the mouth, nose, or ears; longer surgery times; and diabetes. If this is the case, you will be given a prescription.

Please fill this ASAP and take as prescribed for the full course.

If pain increases at or beyond 72 hours after surgery, CALL the office. The surgery area needs to be checked for infection and bleeding.

Avoid the following:

- ◆ **Aspirin:** Do not take for pain (see above). Restart in 2 days if you typically take this medication.
- ◆ **Alcohol:** Do not drink alcohol for 48 hours after surgery, as it may increase the risk of bleeding.
- ◆ **Ibuprofen/NSAIDs (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin, Aleve, Medipren):** These will increase the risk of bleeding.
- ◆ **Tobacco products of any kind:** Do not use for 1 week. Nicotine impairs blood flow and can be especially bad for grafts and flaps. Stay away from second-hand smoke.

If vigorous bleeding occurs:

Apply constant, direct pressure for 10 minutes. This will usually stop the bleeding. If not, continue holding pressure for 20 minutes. Once you are able to stop the bleeding, you will need to change the dressing. If bleeding persists, please call our office at 503-253-3910. If you need assistance with persistent bleeding from your surgery site and the office is closed, please call our after-hours answering service at 503-290-0103. **Do not call after hours unless actively bleeding (i.e. general questions should wait until the next day).**

If you have a surgery site around the mouth or cheeks, limit hot foods, hot drinks, and heavy chewing for 48 hours. This will decrease the chances of bleeding.

Do not use make-up or powder near a wound unless the surface is completely healed.

You have two (or more) layers of stitches. Only the top layer is removed at your follow-up appointment.

The rest are dissolvable. It is common to have stitch fragments appear at the surface of the skin anytime between 4 to 12 weeks after the surgery. It is okay to pull these out with tweezers or leave them alone to dissolve on their own. If you need assistance, please call the office.