

## POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – SKIN SURGERY

Local anaesthetic has been injected into the area of skin where surgery was performed. This will last 3-4 hours then you may feel some pain or discomfort. This pain is usually maximal in the first few days after surgery and is then expected to gradually decrease. (In the event that you have increasing pain after this period of time, please contact the clinic on 9521 1872 as this may indicate wound infection.) Regular Paracetamol is usually sufficient to provide relief from this discomfort. (Avoid Ibuprofen for the first 24 hours as it can increase the risk of bleeding.) Occasionally you will be provided with a prescription for stronger pain killers, as well as antibiotics to prevent wound infection in cases of higher risk. Please take these as instructed.

### WATER PROOF DRESSING

If you have a water proof dressing on your surgical site it should be left intact as directed by your doctor. You may shower with this dressing on and pat dry afterwards. If however the surgical site gets wet under the dressing you should remove this dressing and replace it with a new dressing which can be purchased from any chemist.

### NON WATER PROOF DRESSING

Sometimes it is not practical to place a water proof dressing on your wound such as in hair bearing areas. In most cases there will be **brown** tape on top of the wound with further padding taped onto the area. You may carefully wash around this dressing with a wet washer but do not allow the dressing/wound to become wet until instructed.

You will be instructed when you can remove the outer padding and when you can now get this wet. At this stage you may carefully pat dry the wound area after your shower. The brown tape on the wound should stay on until the stitches are removed in 7-14 days. If the brown tape comes off, you may apply a regular bandaid/dressing to protect the stitches.

In cases of surgery on the arm or leg, there will often be a firm bandage around the limb securing an additional layer of gauze. Keep this firm but

not too tight at all times except when showering. (If it feels too tight please remove the bandage and reapply so that it is comfortable but firm). If you have a water proof dressing on your surgical wound then you may remove the bandage for a shower and then reapply once you have patted dry the dressing underneath. Keep the bandage on until at least 3 days after the surgery or as otherwise instructed.

### **NO DRESSING**

If you have no dressing on your wound ( eg scalp) please keep dry for 2 days and apply vaseline ointment to the wound 3 times daily. In case of bleeding please follow the below instructions

### **BLEEDING**

In rare cases, there may be excessive bleeding after your procedure and you may notice bleeding coming through the dressing and leaking out. This is most likely to occur in the first day after surgery and especially if you are taking blood thinners. If this happens ,remove the dressing and apply **continuous firm pressure** on the wound for 5 minutes. If the bleeding persists , repeat this procedure again and then a third time. If significant bleeding still persists, please call Dr Franck on 9521 1872 during office hours . If afterhours, please attend the nearest Emergency Department in your area.

### **REMOVAL OF STITCHES**

You will be asked to return for suture removal 7-14 days after your procedure. Following removal of stitches you may be asked to buy some “Micropore tape” from the chemist for you to keep the wound taped up for 6-8 weeks. This helps maintain the integrity of the wound and helps reduce scarring in the long term. You will be shown how to do this at the appointment. In addition you may be asked to massage the wound with silicone gel to reduce the risk of scarring.

In case of flap or skin graft surgery, you may be required to attend for wound dressings for a number of weeks after the surgery until the flap or graft is fully healed.