

DR. LOWE'S GENERAL WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Days 1-5 Remove dressing as instructed. Cleanse sutures/wound site with soap and water every day when instructed. Use half strength peroxide solution for dirty wounds three times a day for no more than 2 days or until wound is clean and dried blood is gone. If "Medical Tape" or Steri-strips were used originally simply clean the area, avoid ointments, and allow tape to fall off with time

Apply Vaseline or other ointment or cream recommended sparingly to suture line after cleaning, twice daily for first three days if instructed. If your wound was sealed with Dermabond or "Medical Glue" no further care is required. **With permission**, you may shower the second day after surgery. Let water gently hit the area, clean with soap and water, and blot dry.

Apply cold compresses as much as possible to the incision site during the first 48 hours to reduce swelling. Elevate the operated area above the heart if possible for at least one week. The swelling and discoloration peaks on the third day and then decreases over time.

Days 5-7 Half to all permanent sutures on the face will be removed if present. Sutures in other places or in areas of tension are often left for 2-3 weeks to avoid opening.

Do not apply Polysporin or other ointment after five days. Some patients will be instructed to apply "Medical Tape" or Steri-strips on the suture line for 3-4 weeks. If you are wearing medical tape remove them after 5-7 days, wash and dry the area gently, and reapply if instructed. Keep wounds clean with soap and water, but avoid soaking in the bath until completely healed.

Weeks 2-4 Most of the swelling and discoloration should be gone. If Dermabond or "Superglue" was used on the wound the glue debris should be gently removed over time. If you were instructed to wear Steri-strips, the longer you use the strips after surgery, the better the final appearance of your incision will be. Usually you will be given scar prevention materials such as Mederma, silicone sheeting, or silicone gel.

Weeks 4-6 Apply Nivea moisturizer (or over-the-counter lotion or cream) to wound site and massage the area two or three times a day. Anti-scar materials can be helpful for up to one year and sun exposure should be avoided.

Months 3-6 The scar will be re-evaluated at this time. Usually, scar revision will not be done until six to twelve months after surgery, if needed.

STRENUOUS ACTIVITY AND HEAVY LIFTING IS TO BE AVOIDED FOR AT LEAST 6-8 WEEKS. DIRECT SUN CONTACT ON THE SURGICAL SITE IS TO BE AVOIDED FOR 6-12 MONTHS. PLEASE USE A SUN SCREEN – SPF 25 OR GREATER WHEN IN THE SUN.

***Call the office you have any questions or problems, or if you are having any signs or symptoms of infection (redness, fever, or drainage). (405) 942-4300 JBL**