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See also: **Supplies in Post-Surgical Wound Care**

After Skin Surgery: General Instructions

General Instructions

- Leave the bandage we put on the wound for 24-48 hours
- Don't be alone the first night after surgery if possible! Make sure you can contact us with problems
- Rest as much as you can for the first few days after surgery
- Maintain your normal diet and fluid intake

Pain and Swelling

- If you have pain, take acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) or ibuprofen (e.g. Advil or Motrin) - Plain or Extra strength, 1 to 2 pills every 4 to 6 hours. Maximum 6 extra strength pills in 24 hours (unless you have medical reasons not to use at all, e.g. liver disease, bleeding issues...in these cases ask your pharmacist)
- Keeping the site elevated will help to reduce swelling
- Cool compresses are sometimes helpful, but avoid direct application of ice on the area as this can cause frostbite

Exercise

- Avoid anything that puts excessive pressure or strain on the wound site. It can increase your risk of bleeding, bruising and poor healing.

Face: Until your stitches are removed, avoid any unnecessary physical activities or exertion, especially lifting

Body: Avoid lifting or jogging at least until the stitches are removed

Back: Avoid reaching forward and lifting

Leg and foot: Try to reduce standing or walking for the first few days after surgery. Keep your legs up as much as you can. Avoid tight fitting clothing or shoes.

Swimming

- Do not swim until after your stitches are removed, and avoid potentially contaminated water on your wound at all times.

Danger signs

- **If the wound becomes more red, tender or swollen after 1-2 days, please notify us or consult with your family physician.**
- **Remember, the wound will be red, tender and swollen after surgery, but this should start to improve after 1-2 days, not get worse!**
- **If bleeding can't be controlled with constant pressure for 15 minutes, take off the bandage...wipe the area with gauze, reapply dressing and firm pressure for 30 minutes without stopping..if that doesn't stop the bleeding please notify us or go to your local emergency**