

Wound Care Handout

Wound Care – for use with biopsy or curettage & desiccation (C&D) appointments

Keep wound bandaged and dry for at least 24 - 48 hours. Then remove the bandage and wash the area gently with soap and water, or sterile saline. Pat the wound dry and cover with a thick layer of white petrolatum ointment and a bandage. Repeat these steps daily until your suture removal appointment, or until there is a bright pink layer of skin. The duration of wound healing is variable – this is a rough guideline for how long you may need to care for your wound if it is not sutured:

For biopsy wounds:

- Head/neck: 5-7 days
- Trunk/upper extremities: 12-14 days
- Lower extremities: 3-4 weeks

For curettage and desiccation wounds:

- Head/neck: 2-3 weeks
- Trunk/upper extremities: 4-8 weeks
- Lower extremities: 6-12 weeks

For optimal wound healing, the goal is to keep the wound moist (with Vaseline/white petrolatum ointment) and covered with a bandage. This will prevent scab formation, allow the wound to heal faster, and decrease risk of infection. Avoid using Neosporin, vitamin E, or other products on the wound.

Lower extremity wounds: Wounds below the waist take much longer to heal because of gravity and impaired circulation. It is imperative that you minimize leg swelling using compression treatments, elevation, and avoid standing for long periods of time. Compression treatments include wearing compression stockings or wrapping an ACE bandage from the base of the toes to the area below the knee. When possible, elevate your feet above the height of your heart – especially when sleeping.

PAIN is usually minimal; ice packs and/or acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be useful to control pain. If pain worsens after 3-4 days, please call our office: **360-254-5267**.

BLEEDING can usually be controlled with firm, uninterrupted pressure on the site for 10-15 minutes. If bleeding does not stop, please call our office: **360-254-5267**.

*****If you develop: excessive swelling, redness, tenderness, foul smelling drainage, green or yellow discharge around the surgical site or a fever (temperature more than 101.0 F), please call us immediately: 360-254-5267**

Pathology Results:

We will contact you with your pathology results in 10-14 days. All lab fees are billed separately from the office or procedure visit. These charges will be billed directly to you and/or your insurance by the designated laboratory. For pathology specimens, the laboratory used is CTA in Tigard. If you have questions or concerns about your lab bill, you must call the lab directly.

The pathology exam is a separate charge from the surgical procedure. Sometimes an additional dermatopathology consultation is required to ensure diagnostic accuracy. If a second diagnostic opinion is required, there may be additional fees for another independent pathology exam