



POST-OP SKIN LESIONS/SKIN CANCER REMOVAL INSTRUCTIONS

FLUIDS: It is very important to remember to stay hydrated after any surgery.

DIET: There are no diet restrictions after the surgery. You may eat anything you can tolerate.

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS AND RETURNING TO SCHOOL/WORK: Time off work is needed in some cases, but not all. You will be instructed more specifically by the Doctor after your surgery. If you need time off, a work excuse will be provided upon request. You should limit straining, lifting, and bending over for the first week as this will increase the risk of bleeding. People with a sedentary job not requiring a lot of strain may return sooner, but you must not go to work if you are still taking the narcotic pain medications. Additionally, you should not drive while taking the narcotic medication. If you are doing well enough to take Ibuprofen or acetaminophen you may go back to school/work.

SHOWER/BATHING: You may shower any time after surgery. It is ok to get water on the incision site, but it is best not to soak in a tub for the first few days. You can wash the incision gently with warm/soapy water, and then when drying – do not rub – just pat the wound gently with a clean towel.

MEDICATIONS: The typical medications given after surgery are -

- **Pain medicine** – Typically you will be prescribed Lortab (hydrocodone/acetaminophen) or Percocet tablets (oxycodone/acetaminophen). You should not drive or go to work while using Lortab or Percocet. If the pain is mild, you may use over the counter medications such as ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol) and you may return to work.
- **Antibiotic:** You may be given a prescription for an antibiotic to prevent an infection while you are healing, but this is not always necessary.
- **Ointment:** Please apply ointment to the incision 2-3 times per day after your dressing has been removed by your doctor.

FOLLOW-UP: Each patient who undergoes surgery should be seen in our office within 6-8 days. This appointment should be scheduled at the time you scheduled your surgery, but if this was overlooked, please call the office to schedule this visit.

SCAR CARE: To help improve the final outcome of the scar you can do several things. First, keep ointment on the incision at all times for the first two weeks to keep it moist and clean. After two weeks you can begin to use vitamin E oil or creams that are massaged into the scar area twice a day. You may also consider over-the-counter silicone gel sheets, roll on films, or the product Mederma. All of these things will help with scarring if used daily for at least 3 months; however it can take up to 12 months to be effective. If you have a concern or feel the scar is too noticeable, please bring it to the doctor's attention. Even if it is months/years after the surgery something can still be done to improve an already healed scar. Remember that the greatest factor in how well you will scar, unfortunately, is not how well the wound was closed, but on your own genetics and skin properties.

NUMBNESS: It is likely that an area around the wound will be numb or have a change in sensation. This is normal and unavoidable. It will improve over weeks to months, but in some cases it never feels exactly the same.

MUSCLE WEAKNESS: This is a rare and unlikely problem after surgery, but in some cases a nerve that controls muscle function will be irritated during surgery and cause a temporary weakness. If this occurs, the weakness may exist for several weeks and in rare cases last for months or permanently. Again, this is a rare complication but if you should notice anything feels weak you should contact the doctor to discuss it.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS: Should you have any concerns, questions, or problems during your post-operative recovery period, please do not hesitate to contact the office at **208-656-9646 during business hours**, or **208-419-3254 after hours**. If unable to reach our nurse on call, please go to Madison Memorial Hospital ER and they will page your doctor.

SINCERELY – DR.'S MCMASTER AND PETERSON