

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURGERY

Pre-Surgery Instructions

1. You are going to have an excision where a section of skin will be removed. Sutures will be placed to hold the skin together.
2. Eat normally before the procedure (breakfast or lunch). You do not need to fast.
3. If you are taking certain medications which thin the blood, we will discuss the possibility of discontinuing the medication for 7 days prior to the surgery and 2 days post-operative. **Do not change your medications until you contact our office for approval.** We will discuss your individual needs. The medications include:
 - a. **NSAIDs** (Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Arthrotec, Bufferin, Ecotrin, Excedrine),
 - b. **COX-2 inhibitors** (Celebrex, Bextra, Vioxx, etc.),
 - c. **Anticoagulants** (Aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin, Heparin, Lovenox, etc.). **INCLUDING Baby Aspirin!**
4. Certain vitamin supplements also need to be discontinued for 7 days prior to the surgery and 2 days post-operative. These include: **Echinacea, Garlic, Gingko biloba, Ginseng, Kava Kava, St. John's Wort, Valerian Root, Vitamin E. Also Fish Oil.**
5. If you take other medications, please continue to take them.
6. Pre-medicate with your usual antibiotics if required by your primary medical doctor if you have had:
 - a. Artificial joints within the last year
 - b. Heart valve replacement or murmurs
 - c. Organ transplant
7. Inform our office if you have a pacemaker or defibrillator.
8. The surgical area should be clean and without make-up.
9. If the area is in a hair-bearing area (except scalp), it is useful to shave it one day prior to surgery.
10. Plan on the following activity restrictions to promote good healing:
 - a. You will not be able to return to work the day of the surgery.
 - b. Do not plan on leaving town while your sutures are in place.
 - c. Do not smoke the day of your surgery or during the healing process.
 - d. Avoid alcohol for the week before and the week after the procedure.

e. Avoid caffeine the day of the surgery.

f. Do not swim until the sutures are removed.

g. Do not engage in strenuous exercise or work for 7 days (14 days if the procedure is on the legs or arms). This includes lifting, pushing or pulling.

11. Be prepared to rest and use ice-packs for the first 24-48 hours after the procedure. Purchase an ACE wrap and bring it with you if the surgery is on an arm or leg.

12. You may bring a book, magazine or personal music/headset for the procedure.

Keep this instruction sheet handy for post-surgery instructions.

Post-Surgery Instructions

1. Keep the area as **dry, still, and elevated** (over the level of the heart) as much as possible for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, you may shower, but you may not submerge the area in a bathtub or swimming pool/beach until after your sutures are removed.

2. It is normal to see a small spotting of blood on the first bandage. If there seems to be more than this, apply ice and 20 minutes of constant pressure to encourage clotting and alert our office immediately.

3. Continue the medication and activity restrictions which apply to your case (see pre-operative instructions on the other side).

4. Use an ice pack over the bandage for 15-20 minutes when you get home from the procedure. This should be done at least 3 separate times during the first 24 hours. This will decrease pain, swelling and bleeding.

5. If the surgery site is located on your face or scalp, sleep with your head resting on several pillows. This is to reduce excessive pressure on the wound.

6. Dress the wound **twice daily** (once daily if the wound is on your back):

a. Carefully clean the sutures with soap and water. Pat dry.

b. Apply a generous amount of Aquaphor, Vaseline or Polysporin.

c. Cover with a Band-Aid or make your own dressing of non-stick ("Telfa") pad and medical/paper tape to hold in place.

d. Continue this routine until you return for your suture removal appointment.

e. Do not shave near the wound because the sutures may be cut.

f. Report any fever, swelling or bleeding immediately to our office. **Redness, pain, or drainage of pus that worsens by the day are signs of active infection and should be reported immediately.**

g. If Steri-Strips are in place – do not remove them. Cleanse with soapy washcloth (patting over Steri-Strips) then apply Telfa pad. **If Steri-Strips come off prior to suture-removal appointment, cleanse the area carefully and do not pull on the sutures.**

7. Scar tissue is pink 3-6 months, then usually fades to white. Sunlight exposure may cause skin to darken. The appearance of a surgery scar usually continues to improve for 6-12 months as the scar “matures.” The tissue around a surgical site sometimes remains firm or puffy for several months.