



POSTOP DIRECTIONS FOR PATIENTS WITH SKIN GRAFTS

Your wound has been closed with a skin graft that was taken from a donor site elsewhere on your body and placed onto your open wound. These grafts have the establish blood supplies and connections over the next several days in order to survive. To maximize your change for survival and thus avoiding the need for repeat procedures, the grafts have to remain in place and be very still; that is, they cannot be wiggled around. They have to remain infection free, and they cannot collect fluid or serum underneath the graft. Your dressings have been designed to maximize their survival.

A small amount of care on your part will also help.

1. Try to keep the wound site as still as possible, avoiding excess activities such as exercise or excess errands.
2. Take all vitamins as directed and eat a high protein diet.
3. There will be antibiotics to take in order to prevent infections and also analgesics or pain pills as needed.

DONOR SITES FOR SPLIT THICKNESS GRAFTS

The donor sites from the graft are going to essentially feel like a very bad abrasion or skinned knee. The dressing in place will help this heal faster if the layer that is directly against the skin is left alone. There is typically an antibiotic soaked piece of gauze, sometimes yellow in color, which is placed directly against the skin. The outer dressings, the cotton and gauze pads in place on top, will frequently get saturated with the drainage from this open wound. These can be changed as needed. You will likely need to change them several times in the first few days and then less frequently thereafter. This site should remain fairly clean. Try to keep this out of the shower and dry at least until your first postoperative appointment.



DONOR SITES FOR FULL THICKNESS GRAFTS

Full thickness graft sites are typically closed as a straight line incision with steri-strips or little white pieces of tape on top. Any outer dressings can be changed. These sites can get wet in the shower if needed. Please leave the steri-strips in place until your first postoperative appointment. If they should fall off before then, a little antibiotic ointment, such as Neosporin or Polysporin, and a dry dressing would be helpful.

GRAFT SITES

Your skin graft has been placed very carefully and sutured into position. That graft must stay well protected from movement or sheer forces, infection, or becoming too wet. Leave the dressings in place that have been placed in the Operating Room until your first postoperative visit. If there is a problem with them being too tight, certainly elevate the extremity to cut down on your swelling.

I will see you in the office about a week after surgery. Please call with any questions or concerns.