

POST-OPERATIVE WOUND CARE (for wounds with stitches)

1. SUPPLIES- You will need to purchase or have on hand the following:

- Tap Water and Mild Liquid Soap (1 squirt of soap mixed with a cup of lukewarm tap water)
- Q-tips
- Vaseline
- Telfa Dressing and Surgical tape or Band-Aids

START CARE: _____

2. WOUND CARE

- A. Clean wound two times daily beginning 48 hours after surgery.
- B. Clean wound with Q-tips soaked in tap water/soap mixture. Do not reuse Q-tips. Remove all crusted material and any white/yellow material that can come off easily.
- C. After cleaning, generously apply Vaseline with a clean Q-tip.
- D. Cover your wound with the following dressing:
 - Telfa dressing cut to the size of the wound and then tape or
 - Band-Aids
- E. Continue wound care until stitches are removed or as your doctor directs.
- F. For the first 2 days, try not to bend over at the hips to pick things up (instead go down on one knee or have someone help you) as this may increase blood pressure to the head which may increase your chances of bleeding.

3. PERSONAL HYGIENE

In the first 48 hours, showers or baths are allowed if the bandage remains dry. After 48 hours, the sutures (stitches) may get wet. However, do not immerse them in bath water. Swimming is not allowed until the sutures are removed. You should avoid heavy lifting and exercise until the sutures are removed or as approved by the doctor.

4. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Unless the doctor states otherwise, take Extra Strength Tylenol according to the package directions for pain as needed. If you are having pain that is not controlled by Tylenol, a prescription pain reliever may be given. Do not take both Tylenol and the prescription pain reliever. You should take one or the other. If you are prescribed an antibiotic, please take it as directed until you have finished all of the pills, unless you are not tolerating it for some reason. Please contact the doctor if you are not tolerating the medication. To reduce any swelling, use ice every 10 minutes out of every hour for a maximum of two days.

Alcohol should be avoided for at least 3 days after surgery.

If you are a smoker it is important to **STOP SMOKING** for at least 2 weeks after the surgery, as this can cause the wound to heal poorly. If a flap has been performed smoking can "kill" the tissue.

5. CONTACT THE DOCTOR IF THE FOLLOWING OCCURS:

- A. Bleeding which saturates your dressing (spotting of dressing is expected). To stop the bleeding, hold direct pressure over the dressing for 20 minutes (without peeking). If the wound is still bleeding repeat the process.
- B. Temperature greater than 100 degrees F or 38 degrees C.
- C. Signs of infection, i.e., redness, swelling, foul-smelling drainage, pain or heat.

A PHYSICIAN CAN BE REACHED AT 704-295-0000 during office hours. If you have an emergency related to your surgery after office hours, please call 704-295-0000 and follow instructions for reaching the doctor on call.