

## Wound Care Instructions

Please observe the following guidelines to help your surgical wounds and biopsies heal quickly, successfully and with less scarring:

### **Cleaning**

- If at all possible, do not remove bandage for the first 24 hours after surgery. Your bandage will keep your wound clean, moist, and will help prevent bleeding.
- After 24 hours, gently take off the bandage and clean the area with a mild soap and water. Do not spray water directly into the wound. Rather, gently run water over the wound to rinse off soap. Pat the area dry. Apply a film of ointment (Vaseline, AquaPhor Healing Ointment, or Polysporin) and re-bandage the area. Repeat every 24 hours until you return for removal of the sutures.
- Please do not immerse the wound under water (bath, hot tub, swimming pool, ...) until one week after sutures are removed.

### **Moisture**

- Wounds heal better when they are moist. **If a scab ever develops over a wound that can mean that the wound is too dry.** Dry wounds scar easier, heal slower, and ultimately are not as strong compared to if they were kept moist during the healing process.
- Wounds can be kept moist by liberally applying an ointment (Vaseline, Aquaphor Healing Ointment, or Polysporin) to the wound.
- Liberally apply one of these ointments to the wound as often as is necessary to keep the wound moist. Keep applying the ointment until the wound has healed and no open sore remains.

### **Activity**

- Please keep movement of the surgical site to a minimum for the first three weeks after surgery. Wounds only have approximately 5% of their strength one week after surgery and so care must be taken not to stretch open the surgical site. Avoid stretching or overusing the surgical area for three weeks and then slowly start to increase activity to the affected area.

### **Bleeding**

- Occasionally wounds bleed. Almost all the time, this bleeding can be stopped by applying pressure to the area for 10 minutes. **No peeking!!!** After you have been applying pressure for 10 minutes, using a clock to keep time, slowly let up the pressure and see if the wound is still bleeding. If it is, please call the office and the physician will be paged.

### **Infection**

- Even though exhaustive efforts are taken to eliminate infections, occasionally wounds do become infected. A little redness around the wound is normal. However, if the skin around the wound becomes increasingly more red, swollen, hot, and painful, you may have an infection. If this occurs, please call the office.

### **Pain**

- Mild discomfort and swelling can be encountered during the healing process. This usually occurs 6-24 hours after surgery. Take Tylenol if needed. If discomfort or increased swelling occurs, please call the office.

### **Suture Removal**

- You will be given an appointment for suture removal. This is usually a painless process but some mild discomfort can be experienced.