**Special Instructions for Lower Extremity Sites**

**The legs do not heal as nicely or as quickly as wounds or incisions on the face or arms. They tend to stay discolored for longer amounts of time and have a higher risk of infection and spreading apart.**

**Unna boot:**

Dr. Litani may recommend wearing an unna boot for 2-4 weeks postoperatively. This minimizes the risk of infection and decreases tension on the wound so it can heal faster and look nicer long term.

1. **Do not get the unna boot wet!** Please buy a plastic sleeve at the pharmacy that protects casts and allows you to stand up in the shower. If the boot gets wet, please let the office know and you will be scheduled for a dressing change.
2. Please elevate your leg as much as possible the first 2-3 days postoperatively.
3. You can walk and do your normal daily activities while wearing the unna boot. Please avoid heavy exertion or exercise.
4. You will likely be scheduled for an unna boot replacement weekly. If your incision was sutured, you will likely need one boot change before your sutures are removed 2 weeks after your surgery. If your wound was left open to heal on its own, you may need weekly boot changes for up to 4-6 weeks or even longer.
5. Once your sutures come out after 2 weeks , Dr. Litani usually recommends wrapping up your leg with an ace wrap or coban (similar to how your leg was wrapped in the unna boot) daily for another 2 weeks. You can remove the wrap when showering or sleeping. Wrapping with adequate compression, similar to a compression stocking, will minimize tension on the wound so that it does not spread apart and continues to heal as thin line.

**Sutured leg wound without an unna boot:**

1. To minimize swelling, keep your leg elevated as much as possible the first 2-3 days postoperatively. Your ankle must be higher than your knee for effective elevation.
2. Leg wounds have a tendency to get infected more often than other sites on the body. This is due to “dirt” and bacteria on your body traveling down your leg with shower run-off water or when clothes, especially undergarments come in contact with the wound. Please avoid contact of the surgical site with your underwear.
3. In the shower, wash waist down with antibacterial soap such as Dial or Lever 2000. After completing your shower, wash the surgical site one last time to avoid shower run-off from the rest of your body.
4. After showering, dry the site gently and then apply Aquaphor/Vaseline (or a prescription topical antibiotic if prescribed) over the surgical site and entirely cover the site with a band aid or non-stick gauze pad (Telfa) and paper or surgical tape. This cleansing should be done once daily but can be done more often if you would like. **\* Please keep the surgical site moist with ointment to avoid adherent crusting which can delay healing. \***
5. Dr. Litani recommends minimizing tension on the incision by either wearing an ankle or knee brace if the incision is located near the ankle or knee or by wrapping your leg from the foot to just above the incision with an ace wrap or coban wrap.

**\* In Case of Emergency \* Please call the office at 781-431-7733**