

## Sutured Wound Care Instructions

1. After surgery, go home and take it easy. Do not do any heavy lifting, exertion, straining, or exercising until your follow up appointment with the doctor.
2. Do not drink any alcoholic beverages, take any medications containing aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Aleve, Naprosyn), or Vitamin E for the next 24-48 hours. If you require medicine to control your pain, take only Tylenol or the medication prescribed by your physician.
3. DO NOT SMOKE! Smoking causes wound healing problems by restricting blood flow to the treated area which can cause skin death
4. **For the first 24 hours:** Use caution when showering or bathing and do not to get the dressing wet.
5. **After 24 hours:** Remove the bandage. Wash the surgical site with gentle soap such as Dove or Cetaphil and water. Dry site gently (Do not push down on incision). Apply Aquaphor/Vaseline over the surgical site and cover 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. \*
6. **Absorbable sutures:** After 7 days, please lightly rub a hydrogen peroxide soaked Q tip over the sutures to dissolve any crust and help dissolve the sutures. If any sutures remain after 2 weeks, please use a wet washcloth in the shower to wash/rub in a circular motion over the sutures to help release them.
7. **Facial Wounds:** It is perfectly normal to have bruising/discoloration and swelling around the surgery site and especially around the eyes ( especially if the site was on your nose, forehead, scalp, or near the eyes). Do not be alarmed by this, it will eventually fade and return to normal color in about 1 week. Please stay upright and sleep upright for at least 2 nights if the surgical site is located somewhere below your eyes to avoid fluid collection around the eyes.
8. To minimize swelling: You may use an icepack (on for 10-15 minutes), wrapped in a washcloth every hour to help minimize bruising and swelling during the first 48 hours.
9. **If you have steri-strips:** These are small white strips that look like tape that support the incision. These need to remain on the incision until they fall off. You do not need to replace them if they fall off before your next visit. You can clean over the top of the strips with tap water and gentle soap.

Instructions continue on back →



During the healing process you will notice a number of changes. **It is normal for the incision to appear bumpy or raised like a ridge.** This is done by design to avoid an indentation later on as the scar matures. It is also normal for the incision to be slightly pink immediately over the incision or in between and under the sutures. If this redness/pinkness spreads away from the incision and appears blotchy, this can be a sign of infection and you will need to contact the office. Severe itching with extensive redness in the shape of the overlying bandage may indicate sensitivity to the ointment used to dress the wound or a reaction to the bandage adhesive. Please contact the office if this happens.

You may experience a sensation of tightness as your incision heals. This is normal and will gradually subside. Please avoid excessive tension on the incision that can occur with stretching and weight lifting as this will stretch out the scar and lead to a poor cosmetic result. Scars do not like tension! Frequently, surgery involves nerves and sensation may take up to a year to return to normal. As the nerves heal, you can experience a tingling or zinging around the surgical site weeks to months after the surgery. Your healed wound may be sensitive to temperature changes (such as cold air).

It is also normal for a "blush" or pinkness to remain on the scar as the incision flattens out. This is due to normal blood vessel recruitment to the site for healing. This "blush" or appearance of broken blood vessels can take up to 1 year to fade. Please see Dr. Litani for your 3 month scar check to discuss any concerns with redness or healing. Dr. Litani often performs small procedural "tweaks" to the scar after the 3 month mark to help the scar fade and heal so the scar is not noticeable.

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