

PIMA DERMATOLOGY

ADULT / PEDIATRIC / COSMETIC / LASER & SKIN SURGERY

Mohs Postoperative Care: *Good Healing, Good Health and Follow-Up Examinations*

Information, Comfort Level, and Support

Our team at Pima Dermatology wants you to have the best postoperative care and healing possible. To accomplish this, we will assist in every way we can. We believe a successful surgery outcome is achieved through partnership with patients who understand and fulfill their part of the process as well. We will ensure you have the information, comfort level and support necessary to successfully do your part.

Each patient differs in his/her capacity to deal with such things as stitches, bruising, a temporary surgical wound, and dressings. We want to determine your comfort level and provide support at that level. Some patients are uncomfortable with any aspect of their own medical or surgical care and need a little more support from us. Other patients become interested in the process and view it as an experience to learn more about their body's capacity to heal, thus performing much of their own care. Not surprisingly, most patients fall somewhere in the middle. Feel free to tell us about yourself in this regard at the *procedure intake process* and we will customize your care accordingly.

Wound Care Shopping List

- Vaseline
- Non-stick dressing pad (ie., Telfa)
- Q-Tips
- Cast Bag (only if surgery is on the lower leg)
- These items will be available for purchase at Pima Dermatology or you can purchase at your local drug store.

Wound Care Information

With this introduction, the wound care information below provides the essentials for over 90% of our patients who will be discharged the day of surgery with stitches, a bandage, and instructions to return on a specific date and time for removal of stitches.

- Immediately following surgery, local **anesthesia effect** normally wears off within 1 to 3 hours. You will be reminded to take two Tylenol (generic acetaminophen) or Ibuprofen in that time period to decrease pain and you will continue to take this medication as needed. Most pain or discomfort occurs within the first 48 hours; simply taking over-the-counter Tylenol effectively manages this in 90% of patients. Many patients have experienced very little pain and have reported they have not exceeded the first two pills. However, perception of pain is both an objective and subjective experience and patients are also on a continuum relative to their needs to address pain. Larger surgical procedures and more sensitive body areas may require stronger analgesics or pain killers and our staff is prepared to tailor this aspect of your care to your needs as well. Prescription-strength pain medication will be prescribed if needed.

Please see reverse side of page.

- **Good hygiene** is the first step in good healing. On the day following surgery, you will be allowed to remove your bandage. At this time, you may shampoo, shower and bathe normally. If you have a skin graft or your surgery heals on its own without stitches, these instructions will be slightly revised. You will be advised how to reapply an ointment and bandage the stitched wound following your daily bathing routines.

Wound Care Information Continued

- **Sufficient nutrition** is encouraged. Prior to surgery, review your dietary practices. Diet should be sufficient in either vegetable or animal protein. Take a daily multivitamin with minerals for at least 6 weeks after your surgery. Remember to drink plenty of water.
- **Infections** are very rare with proper wound care. However, should your wound become more painful in the days following surgery, or if your wound becomes hot, red, and tender or painful to touch, and/or develop an odor or opaque drainage (green and/or yellow), **please contact our office immediately** so we can examine and care for you accordingly.
- We want our patients to return to life routines and activities as soon as possible. In counter balance to this, if good healing is to occur, some **protective measures and limitation of activity** will be required. In smaller wounds (and in non-movement areas of the body), this may require limitation for only 48 hours; resuming activity that is not vigorous enough to cause discomfort at the surgery site will then be permitted. In other instances, a more extended limitation may be necessary to ensure good healing without complications.

Post Suture Removal

- **After stitches are removed**, some reasonable guarding of the surgery site is required. At this time, the wound has only 20% of its original tissue strength, which will increase greatly with time. It is also important to apply the ointment you have been instructed to use for three days after stitch removal. This will enable the nearly invisible skin perforations at the site of the suture material to heal without interruption.
- Typically your **follow-up care** for the surgery is scheduled at two months, six months, and then one year. Subsequent exams after 20 months are individualized to your skin care needs.

Successful wound care employs fairly simple steps and principles. Postoperative healing will suffer if steps are neglected. Be sure to review all materials provided to aid in healthy healing!

If you have any questions, please contact us at (520) 795-7729.

We look forward to providing you with excellent care and support!