

Skin Surgery Post-Operative Care

Dermatology - Cannock Chase Hospital

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

Introduction

Your skin surgery has now been completed. This leaflet provides you with some important information regarding your post-operative care which will help to promote optimal wound healing.

Immediately after the procedure the site of surgery will remain numb for anything from a few minutes to a few hours. If the surgery was on your face the muscles nearby may not work properly for a short time due to the effects of local anaesthetic which will wear off. Beware of hot food and drinks if the surgery was near your mouth and your lip feels numb. As your sensation returns you may experience some discomfort, and it is therefore advisable to take simple painkillers such as paracetamol when you get home.

You should relax and rest for 48 hours, following your skin surgery. Refrain from any excessive exercise or heavy lifting for days. You should avoid alcohol for 24 hours. Smoking impairs wound healing and should be avoided for a minimum of five days.

The dressing

There may be a dressing over the wound. The dressing is designed to apply gentle pressure to the wound, therefore reducing the risk of bleeding.

Wound care

You need to keep the stitches dry for days.

If there is a dressing over the wound, leave in place for days before changing the dressing.

On the day after your skin surgery, gently wash and dry the wound, remove any steri-strips which are still in place and apply Vaseline (100% pure petroleum jelly) from a brand-new pot (this is to reduce the risk of wound contamination or wound infection) to the wound or stitches for one month.

Stitch Removal

Your stitches are:

☐ Dissolvable

☐ Non Dissolvable

Results

The skin that has been removed will be analysed by our pathologists. For results, the timing can vary but please allow eight weeks from your surgery date.

General Advice

It is important to try and avoid stretching of your wound, particularly during the first few weeks post-surgery whilst the scar is maturing. A degree of long-lasting numbness immediately along the scar-line is a common consequence of surgery resulting from injury to the superficial nerves present in the skin. If the surgery was on your forehead, the numbness may extend up towards your scalp.

Problems after skin surgery are not common but sometimes can occur. If the dressing becomes heavily soaked with blood, or the wound becomes unexpectedly swollen or uncomfortable, there may be a problem with bleeding. This generally occurs within the first few hours post-surgery.

If the wound becomes unexpectedly sore, reddened, weepy or crusted there may be a problem with infection. This generally occurs several days after surgery. It should be remembered that there will be a mild degree of redness and scabbing along the scar line and is quite normal. Please contact your practice nurse at your GP Surgery or if out of hours: please contact the GP out of hours service or local emergency department (A&E) for wound care advice or concerns.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

When can I drive after a surgical procedure?

The effects of anaesthetic drugs may last for at least three hours and longer for major operations.

It may take longer to recover from your surgery than from your anaesthetic. Your surgeon will give you advice on when it should be safe for you to drive after your procedure or operation.

Before getting in the driving seat, you will need to be sure that you can use the brakes and drive safely without being distracted by pain. The DVLA rules are that you can drive after surgery when you're safely able to perform an emergency stop. In the absence of specific medical advice, it is a personal decision to make.

If you are taking strong painkillers, you also need to be aware that these drugs can make you feel drowsy and affect your driving.

By law it is illegal to drive while under the influence of drugs (local anaesthetics included). You need to decide whether you think that you can drive safely. If you feel drowsy, distracted by pain or generally unwell, you'll need to wait a little longer until it is safe for you to drive.

You should check with your insurance company that you are covered to drive after your surgery.

Check with the <https://www.gov.uk/surgery-and-driving> about any specific time periods recommended.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments, and clinics at our hospitals.

We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team.

We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences. Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help. If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns.

You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Patient Information Centre

New Cross Hospital

Wolverhampton

WV10 0QP.

01902 695362 or 07880 601085

email: rwh-tr.pals@nhs.net

Opening times: The PALS telephone lines are open 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays).

Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day. If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.

Dermatology Unit, Cannock Chase Hospital:

Secretaries: Dianne Rigby 01543 576033

Debbie Windsor 01543 576765

Karen Thompson 01543 576038

Reception: Monday to Thursday 01543 576234

01902 307999 Ext 66234

Dermatology Unit

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References

<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patients/patient-information-resources/patient-frequently-asked-questions-faq>

<https://www.gov.uk/surgery-and-driving>

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。