

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Skin surgery



SOUTHERN AESTHETIC
PLASTIC SURGERY

Activities

We want you to recover from your surgery as quickly as possible, but it is important you invest some time in your recovery. Take things quietly for a couple of days, and avoid activities and foods that make your skin flushed. Ice packs applied over dressings for the first day can help decrease bruising. Bruising is common, and will fade in 7-10 days.

Suture lines

You can remove the padded dressing over your wound after two days. Leave any tapes (Steristrips) that are directly over the wound.

Wash the wound by letting soap and water gently run over it in the shower. Avoid having a bath or swimming for at least two weeks after your operation, as this can cause an infection.

Applying a layer of Vaseline over exposed suture lines twice a day helps protect the wound and soften any crust on the surface.

Skin grafts

Graft should be kept covered until the post operative appointment. Try to keep the dressing intact.

Pain relief and medications

Most patients are given a local anaesthetic during their operation. This can result in numbness that lasts up to a day. You are likely to need some pain relief after the local anaesthetic wears off.

You should not just put up with significant pain. Please use any painkillers that were prescribed after the operation. Over the counter medications that can help are regular Panadol and anti-inflammatories.

Recommence all your normal medications, including blood thinners, on the evening after your operation.

You may have been prescribed an antibiotic. Please take the full course unless you have a reaction.

Signs to watch out for

The recovery after skin surgery is usually smooth. Occasionally problems arise, and there are some warning signs to look out for.

Severe pain that is not controlled by your painkiller.

Continuous bleeding through your bandages. Some staining or bleeding is not unusual. Elevating the wound and gentle pressure on the dressing for five minutes can usually stop bleeding.

Feeling unwell, fever of 38° or higher, redness spreading around the wound, a foul **smell** or a **creamy discharge** developing after a couple of days can be a sign of an infection.

We want to help if any of these problems develop. Please contact us on 9588 2494 during office hours, or St Gorge Hospital Plastic Surgery Registrar 9113 1111 for urgent problems after hours.

Appointments

Your wound will need to be reviewed in the first week post operatively.