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South Carolina Skin Cancer Center

Wound Care Instructions
For
One Week after Surgery

- Leave flat, brown dressing on your skin for ____ days after today's dressing change.
- When you remove the dressing, you may resume your regular skin care routine, including washing with mild soap and water, applying moisturizer, make-up and sunscreen.
- If there are any open or bleeding areas at the incision line you should begin to cover the area with a dressing **daily** as follows:

2 x daily for
1 week

- Rinse the area with your normal soap and water. (Shower/ bathe normally.)
- Dry wound with Q-tip or gauze pad.
- Apply Vaseline Ointment or Aquaphor Ointment to the open area.
- Do **NOT** use Neosporin Ointment!
- Cover the wound with a band-aid or nonstick gauze pad and paper tape.

- Once the dressings are removed, the scar will be red and firm (especially in the lip/chin area). This is normal and will fade with time. It may take 6-12 months for this to happen.



- **Massaging** the area will help the scar soften and fade quicker. Begin to massage the area **one month** after the bandages have been removed. To massage, apply pressure directly and firmly over the scar with the fingertips and move in a circular motion. Massage the area for a few minutes, 5-6 times a day. Continue to massage area until you do not feel the tight scar tissue under the skin. At that point you can stop massaging wound.
- Approximately 6-8 weeks after surgery it is not uncommon to see the formation of "tender, pimple-like" bumps along the scar. This is normal. As the scar continues to mature and the stitches underneath the skin begin to dissolve, this might occur. Do not pick or squeeze, this will resolve on its own. Should one break open producing a small amount of drainage, apply Vaseline Ointment or Aquaphor Ointment a few times a day until the wound is completely healed.
- Numbness in the surgical area is expected. It may take 12-18 months for the feeling to return to normal. During this time sensations of itchiness, tingling and occasional sharp pains may be noted. This is normal and will subside once the nerves have completely healed.

In Case of Emergency:

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