

Surgery ~ Scar Revision Instructions

SCAR REVISION INSTRUCTION SHEET

The following post-operative instructions are specific to your procedure & are meant to serve as guidelines to help you through your recovery. Please read them carefully.

EMERGENCIES

A hematoma is the most common emergent event within the first 24 hours. If your surgical site swells to twice its normal size, call Dr. Cooper immediately. Rest assured ~ this is not a subtle event! You will know when to call.

For routine matters, please call the office during normal business hours (9AM – 5PM). If you have an emergency that cannot wait, I am available by cell phone (307) 699-3115 on evenings & weekends. Please respect my family time & call **ONLY** for urgent or emergent issues. Non-emergent phone calls after hours & on weekends will be subject to a \$50.00 fee. Examples of urgent or emergent issues include the following: sudden onset or extreme swelling of the surgical site, redness / warmth involving your incision(s), or unilateral calf pain or swelling. If I do not answer right away, leave a message. I will call you back! If you have a life-threatening emergency, such as crushing chest pain or shortness of breath, call 911 immediately. Do not try to reach me first. If you have any questions on a Thursday or Friday, please call the office to have those questions answered. Do not delay those questions & have those issues become an urgent matter over the weekend.

NARCOTICS AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Pain is normal after surgery. Most pain after scar revision is controlled with Tylenol and non-narcotics.

Narcotics can cause nausea. To minimize this, avoid taking medications on an empty stomach. Try to stagger your medications 20-30 minutes apart. You may “halve” the pain pills if they are too strong for you.

If you are taking narcotics for any other reason prior to your procedure, please take this into consideration. Consultation with your pain management physician prior to your surgery is highly encouraged & is the responsibility of the patient.

BANDAGES

It is generally quite difficult to maintain a dressing for any length of time on the face. Apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment twice daily to the wound. You may cover with a light gauze dressing, Band-Aid, etc. if desired. Expect some drainage from around the surgical site for 1-3 days. You may “blot” the drainage with a gauze or a clean, soft cloth. For scar revisions involving any other part of the body, please leave the dressing in place until your follow-up appointment.

PERSONAL CARE

For scar revisions involving the face, you may shower on post-op day 2 facing **AWAY** from water. You may gently clean around the surgical site with a warm, washcloth and pat dry. It is acceptable to get the face “misty” wet.

For scar revisions involving any other part of the body, your dressings are waterproof, and you may shower as usual on post-operative day 1.

SLEEP

Sleeping with the head elevated for the first few days may help reduce swelling.

ITCHING / RASHES

Itching around your incisions is normal & is to be expected after surgery. It is considered a sign of healing. However, severe itching with redness or blistering is often a sign of a reaction to medications or adhesive. If you experience itching with redness or blistering around your incisions, gently remove your dressings & take an antihistamine. Benadryl, Claritin, Allegra, Zyrtec, or Xyzal are all acceptable. You may also use Benadryl cream, but do NOT use any topical containing hydrocortisone.

Please let us know if you have a sensitivity to adhesives or tape prior to surgery. This will help avoid skin sensitivity involving your incisions.

STITCHES

Dissolvable stitches do not require removal. Permanent stitches will be removed in the office approximately 7-10 days after surgery. Your surgeon will let you know which type of sutures you have.

EXERCISE / ACTIVITY

Light activity until otherwise instructed. Indoor / Outdoor walking is acceptable. No weights or running for 3-4 weeks.

ALCOHOL

You may consume alcoholic beverages once you are no longer taking prescription pain medication. However, please take into consideration your other medications and how they may interact with alcohol.

FEVER

If you experience any increased warmth or redness around your incision OR fever (>101.5), please call the office.

TRAVEL

No travel for 2 weeks following your procedure.

OTHER

No swimming (chlorine / saltwater / etc.) for 3 weeks.

Cold compresses are acceptable. However, please **DO NOT APPLY ICE OR HEAT DIRECTLY** to the surgical site. Your recently operated skin cannot sense extremes of temperatures, which can result in heat or cold burns and compromise your results.

Arnica and Bromelain are recommended homeopathic supplements which facilitate resolution of bruising and swelling after surgery. These can be found online at www.vitamedica.com/product/arnica-bromelain