

# WOUND CARE AFTER SKIN SURGERY

**WHAT TO DO ON THE DAY**

**You will need to rest after surgery and avoid any strain to the area.**

### **For surgery on the head/face:**

- **Keep head upright, no leaning forward or bending down for 24 hours**
- **Use an extra pillow at night.**

### **For surgery on the arm/leg:**

- **Keeping it raised can help reduce swelling and throbbing.**
- **The local anaesthetic will wear off after 2-4 hours and you may experience mild pain or throbbing. Simple painkillers such as Paracetamol, 1g every 4-6 hours, up to 4 per day should help this.**
- **Avoid Aspirin, Ibruprofen or Voltarol, as these can worsen bruising or bleeding.**

### **How to look after the wound**

- **Keep the dressing clean and dry for 24 hours. (Should it come loose you may use tape to secure it.)**
- **After 24 hours remove the dressing and wash gently with soap and water (shampoo on the scalp) either by washing in the shower or splashing the area with warm soapy water. The dressing may be easier to remove if you wet it first.**
- **Apply a thin layer of clean Vaseline® directly over your stitches with your clean hands. This will help keep your wound clean and moist and will prevent scabs from forming.**
- **Apply a waterproof plaster directly over the wound**
- **Repeat this routine every day, once a day, until your stitches have been removed or, if there are no stitches, until the wound has healed over.**

## What to expect:

- **Bruising:** This is common, especially if the surgery was near the eyes.
- **Bleeding:** Very occasionally the wound may bleed. If this happens, sit down and press firmly over the dressing for 15 minutes. Slowly release pressure and if the wound is still bleeding, press again for another 15 minutes. This will stop most bleeding but if you are concerned or if the wound is still bleeding, please contact me via Kate Wilkinson.

**In rare cases where the bleeding does not stop you may need to attend the nearest Accident & Emergency department.**

## Signs of Infection - what to look out for

- It is expected that your wound will be slightly red and tender to the touch for the first couple of days after your surgery. If the wound becomes very painful, hot or red and swollen, please contact me as soon as possible.  
It is possible you may need antibiotics.
- Please arrange for the \_\_\_\_\_stitches to be removed after \_\_\_\_\_ days.
- Appointments with the nurse can be booked at Nuffield The Holly or Spire London East hospitals for removal of stitches. Avoid strenuous exercise that will put tension on the wound for another 4-6 of weeks depending on the site of surgery.