



## WACCAMAW DERMATOLOGY

— Skin Cancer Institute —

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### Dissolvable Suture Wound Care Instructions

#### ❖ Wound Care:

- **Leave the pressure dressing on for \_\_\_\_\_ hours and keep it dry.**
- Once removed, gently clean the area with regular soap and water.
- DO NOT scrub the area, and DO NOT allow the shower pressure to hit the area directly.
- Apply the ointment provided or as directed to the surgical site **twice daily** to prevent scabbing.
  - Do NOT use any antibacterial ointment because they can cause allergic reactions (unless instructed by your physician).
- There is no need to re-bandage the area after 2 days.
  - If you prefer to keep the wound covered, you can use non-adhesive or non-stick gauze and secure it with paper tape. Change the dressing daily and as needed.
- **Always practice good hand hygiene** --> wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before changing the dressing or touching the wound to apply ointment.

#### ❖ Pain:

- Apply **ice packs** for 5-10 minutes every few hours for 1-2 days after surgery to reduce swelling and pain. You do not need to apply ice packs while sleeping.
- **Elevate** the surgical site to minimize swelling.
- For pain/discomfort, we recommend **acetaminophen** and/or **ibuprofen**. Follow the bottle's instructions for dosing instructions. It is okay to alternate these two (if you have no contraindications). For any non-resolving pain, contact your provider.

#### ❖ Bleeding:

- If bleeding occurs, hold constant, firm pressure over the area for 15 minutes (no peeking!). Repeat once more if needed. If bleeding persists, please call our office.

#### ❖ Optimal Healing:

- Avoid ANY strenuous activity (i.e. heavy lifting, bending over, or exercise) for one week to minimize bleeding risk and to minimize tension places on your stitches. If your surgery was on your back, arm, or leg, avoid strenuous activity for two weeks.
- Avoid smoking for at least 3 weeks as it leads to poor wound healing. It is best to stop smoking overall.
- Your top layer (visible) stitches will dissolve in 7-10 days. The stitches under the skin surface usually take 8 weeks to dissolve.

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