



## WACCAMAW DERMATOLOGY

— Skin Cancer Institute —

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### Skin Graft Wound Care Instructions

#### What do you do for...

##### ❖ Wound Care:

- For the **GRAFT SITE**, leave the pressure dressing on for AT LEAST 7 DAYS & keep it dry.
  - Do NOT remove any dressing
- For the **DONOR SITE** (the place the skin graft was taken from), leave the pressure dressing on for 48 hours & keep it dry until time to remove.
- Apply the ointment provided to the donor site at least once daily to prevent scabbing.

##### ❖ General Tips:

- Once a pressure dressing is removed from the donor site, gently clean the area with the soap from your wound care kit and water. You can use baby shampoo when washing your hair for wounds on the scalp.
- DO NOT scrub the area, and DO NOT allow the shower pressure to hit the wound directly.
- To cover the site, you can use non-adhesive or non-stick gauze and secure it with paper tape.
- **Always practice good hand hygiene** → wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before changing the dressing or touching your wound to apply plain petrolatum.

##### ❖ Pain:

- For pain/discomfort, we recommend **acetaminophen (Tylenol)** and/or **ibuprofen (Advil)**. Follow the bottle's instructions for dosing instructions. It is okay to take both at the same time (they do not interact)
  - If your provider has given you a prescription pain medication, it may already contain acetaminophen and additional acetaminophen should not be taken. For any non-resolving pain, contact your provider.

##### ❖ Optimal Healing:

- Avoid ANY strenuous activity (i.e. heavy lifting, bending over, or exercise) for **2 weeks**. Rest is important because your graft needs to form a new blood supply to fully survive.
- Avoid smoking for at least 2 weeks as it causes poor wound healing. Smoking can cause the graft to die.

#### What you should expect...

- ❖ The surface of your graft may initially look deep purple or even black for 1-2 weeks. **Do NOT try to remove any part of this scab/crust.** Keep the skin graft MOIST with the plain petrolatum to ensure that the graft survives. Slowly, over 3-6 weeks, the graft should appear pink. Eventually it will appear more skin-colored.