

Hill Center for Dermatology, PC

Post-Operative Instructions

- Keep the area clean and dry for 24 hours. After 24 hours, you may bathe normally.
- Gently clean the area with soap and water daily, and keep covered with Vaseline or Aquaphor ointment to avoid scab formation.
- Watch for signs of infection, noted below.
- If surgical wound is on the face or scalp, swelling, bruising and throbbing may occur which can be minimized by sleeping with head elevated.
- Oozing of a small amount of blood may be controlled by applying continuous pressure directly to the site with a clean gauze or washcloth for 15-20 minutes.
- If bleeding does not stop after 15-20 minutes of holding direct continuous pressure, repeat the pressure for an additional 20 minutes. If bleeding persists, please call our office for further instructions.
- Swelling will occur and can be decreased by keeping the surgical site elevated and applying a cold pack around the bandage for 10-15 minutes every hour.
- Avoid strenuous activity, exercise, bending, straining, stooping, or heavy lifting that affect the surgical site until stitches are out.
- Do not submerge the operative site under water in a pool, bathtub, or Jacuzzi until stitches are removed.
- For discomfort, you may use Tylenol for the first 24 hours. After 24 hours, you may use prescription pain medication, aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen.
- Please call our office if you do not receive notification of biopsy results within 10-14 days.

If you notice any of the following signs or symptoms, or if you have any problems or concerns, call our office:

303-526-1117

Pain	Swelling	Heavy Bleeding
Redness	Opening of the wound	Drainage of pus

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Scar Formation

- All wounds of any significant depth heal by scar formation. Some individuals scar more than others and it is essentially impossible to predict exactly how one's scar will heal.
- Scars on the face tend to heal best, while those on the back, chest, abdomen, or upper legs and arms, tend to heal less well, as they stretch over time.
- Scar tissue is usually pink for 3-6 months and then fades to a slightly lighter than normal skin color. Exposure to heavy sunlight may cause a scar to heal darker. Sun avoidance and use of sunscreen over scar sites is advisable for 6 months after surgery.
- Massaging the wound site speeds the healing process by softening the scar tissue and helping to diminish the appearance of the scar. Begin massaging the area 6 weeks after surgery for 20 minutes a day and continue for 2-3 months.
- After the sutures are removed, the use of silicone based scar gel twice daily for 3-6 months may help reduce the appearance of scars.
- It is common for slight loss of sensation or numbness to occur around scars. Most of this numbness resolves within 12 months but some may persist permanently.
- Scars continue to mature, contract, and remodel for up to 12 months. The final appearance of a scar should not be fully judged for at least 12 months.
- Certain complications can cause increased scarring. These include wound infection, blood clots (hematoma), and opening of the wound after sutures are removed (dehiscence). Following the activity restrictions advised by your provider, performing careful regular wound care, and notifying your doctor promptly for any signs of infection, will help minimize these risks.
- Any scar can heal thickened (keloid), indented, or discolored. Keloid scars are more common in certain areas such as the mid chest, ear lobes, around the jaw line, and on the upper arms and torso, and in individuals with a history of keloid scarring.
- Because scar formation depends upon the interaction of many different factors, the final appearance can never be guaranteed with absolute certainty.
- It is always our desire for scars to heal as nicely as possible. If your scar has not healed well, there are some procedures which may improve the appearance. These may include injection of cortisone, dermabrasion, or surgical revision. If you are not pleased with how your scar has healed, you may wish to discuss these or other options with your provider.