



OHIO PLASTIC SURGERY SPECIALISTS

WALTER L. BERNACKI, MD • CHRISTOPHER G. ZOCHOWSKI, MD

Board Certified Plastic Surgeons

Post-Operative Instructions for Skin Grafting

Diet

Start your diet with clear liquids or a light soup. Most people can resume a normal diet the day of surgery. Advance your diet as tolerated to a regular diet over the next 24 hours. Avoid caffeine, as this is a vasoconstrictor and can have a negative impact on the circulation to the skin graft.

You may experience some constipation as a result of the pain medication. Over the counter laxatives such as Milk of Magnesia or a stool softener are recommended. If this is not sufficient, then dulcolax or a glycerin suppository may be necessary.

Activity

If your skin graft was placed on the face, trunk, arms: Modest activity is encouraged in the first few post-operative days, gently exercising your legs while sitting or lying in bed. Walking short distances in the first few days is fine. AVOID FRICTION or PRESSURE on the skin grafted area.

If your skin graft was placed on a foot or lower extremity: You will have specialized instructions. You may not walk and should stay off of your feet with the leg elevated above your heart.

Wound Care

Leave all dressings in place until you are seen in the office. You may notice some drainage or blood seeping through the dressings. This is true of the donor and recipient areas. This is quite normal and expected. Often the drainage is the result of the liquid used within the dressings.

Bathing

I ask that no showers are taken until the first dressings are removed (sponge baths are ok).

Pain Control

Take the narcotic pain medicine as needed. As pain becomes more manageable, you are encouraged to switch to Extra Strength Tylenol. Please do not drive until you are no longer taking the narcotic and are free of significant pain.

Emergencies

If there is a problem, please call our office 614.682.5095. Most issues are easily addressed and do not require significant intervention.

The most common emergencies that might need attention are:

- Nausea that lasts 4 hours or more and does not respond to medication
- Bleeding that is persistent and uncontrolled
- High fever lasting more than a few hours and not responding to medication
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Leg swelling
- Loss of consciousness

If you feel the situation is urgent, call 911 and/or proceed directly to the closest emergency room. Please call us as well.

Follow-Up

Follow-up is typically in 5-7 days and should be scheduled by calling our office at 614.682.5095 if it has not already been arranged. The dressings will be removed at this appointment.