



## **WOUND CARE FOR WOUNDS WITH SUTURES**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- Apply ice for 5-10 minutes every hour over the bandage, for wounds around the eyes or lips, while awake for the first 24 hours.
- Reduce strenuous activities while sutures are in. No swimming or hot tub use until the sutures are removed.
- For wounds on the arms and legs, elevate the limb above the level of the heart when possible. For wounds of the head, you may want to sleep on an extra pillow to keep your head above the level of your heart for the first 2-3 days.
- Take Tylenol (or a prescription medicine given to you by the doctor) for pain.

### **WOUND CARE:**

- Leave the bandage in place until the morning after the surgery – you may leave the bandage on while showering the first day, but be sure to remove the wet bandage after you shower. After the first day, you may remove the band-aid before you shower and gently wash the wound.
- Daily until sutures removed: gently clean with soap and water. If area is crusted; use a solution with 50/50 diluted hydrogen peroxide and water.
- Apply ointment once daily to the wound to keep the suture line moist.
- You may leave the wound open to the air, after the first day unless it is in an area where it will be rubbed by clothing. In that case, apply a fresh band-aid each day until the sutures are removed.
- The goal is to keep the suture line moist and free of crusts (“scabs”).

### **NORMAL EVENTS:**

- Slight bleeding or spotting on the bandage is normal for the first 1-3 days.
- Mild bruising, swelling and discoloration are normal. In some cases, bruising may be widespread.
- The suture line will be pink, but should lighten every day.
- The skin around the wound will feel tight.
- Moderate pain, throbbing and electric shock sensations are normal for the first several days.
- The suture line may also be numb (without feeling).

**BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

- After 48 hours, most pain and swelling should subside. New PAIN or SWELLING after this time is not normal.
- The wound should look better every day. Increased redness, warmth, pain or drainage is not normal and may indicate an early infection.

**CALL THE OFFICE IF...**

- You have bleeding that cannot be stopped with pressure (see below).
- You are having severe pain, not relieved by your pain medicine.
- There is a sudden rapid swelling of the surgical site.
- You notice increasing redness, warmth or drainage.

**BLEEDING:**

- Try to stay relaxed and elevate the bleeding area.
- Apply firm pressure directly over the wound for 10 minutes (by the clock) with a clean gauze or cloth.
- After 10 minutes, remove pressure. If still bleeding, repeat pressure for another 10 minutes.
- If bleeding persists, call the office.

Call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment. If you have problems or questions, call the office at 503-245-2415. If you are unable to reach the office, our answering service may contact the provider on call or go to your local emergency room.