

## Lesion Excision – Post-Operative Instructions

Apply pressure to the area for 5 minutes by the clock in the recovery room to decrease bruising. If you notice any bleeding at home (which occasionally happens as the freezing wears off), take a clean cloth and apply firm pressure to the area for 10 full minutes. This resolves 95% of bleeding problems. If bleeding persists, try again for at least 10 minutes, and if still problematic call our office (during regular work hours, 8am-5pm), the plastic surgeon on-call (604-527-4925; for weekends or after hours), or visit your nearest emergency department. Keep the area elevated as much as possible over the next few days to decrease swelling. Icing the area can also be helpful, just don't get the dressing wet.

You may shower after 48 hours (or 24 hours if you're able to keep the area dry). The outer dressing is usually occlusive, and water can run over it. After 1 week, remove this outer dressing but leave the tape (steri-strips) for another few days. These can get wet, but after showering, lightly pat the tape with a dry cloth or use a hair dryer. No bathtubs, hot tubs, pools, lake water, well-water to the area until it has completely healed (~3-4 weeks). Usually the steri-strips can be removed 10-14 days after surgery. If you have exposed sutures (eg. scalp excision), apply polysporin to the area once per day and wait 48 hours before showering.

### INFECTION / COMPLICATIONS

If you have any signs of infection (eg. increased pain after 2-3 days, increasing redness, shiny skin, purulence, fevers, red streaks up your arm), call my office for an appointment to see me. If you have an area of incisional breakdown, please call the office for a follow-up appointment. This happens from time to time, and generally is treated with dressing changes and polysporin until it heals.

### AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY CARE

If you are having a true emergency, please call 604-527-4925 and ask to speak with Dr. McInnes. If he is unavailable, please ask for the plastic surgeon on call or visit your nearest emergency department.

### SCAR MANAGEMENT

It takes a full year for a scar to mature. It will become red after surgery, and then typically starts to fade to white after 6+ months. If it gets too much sun while it is healing, it can turn permanently dark, so I recommend keeping the area out of the sun as much as possible. Techniques include sun-avoidance, long clothing, blocks (eg. a Band-aid over the area when in the sun), and applying sunscreen (SPF 30) even if it's cloudy. I typically recommend using a non-irritating lotion that contains sunscreen daily for the first 6-12 months.

After 4 weeks, assuming the incision is well healed, you may begin scar massage to the area to help soften the scar. I recommend using a lotion or cream that doesn't irritate your skin, and massaging it into the scar for 5 minutes, several times per day. If there is too much tension across your scar (eg. with certain movements) it can widen.

### PATHOLOGY

Unless specifically told otherwise, you should **call the office in 3 weeks to get your pathology results**. If you have a follow-up appointment, this is not necessary. Your family doctor will also get a copy of the pathology results

### QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or concerns, please call or email the office.

## **PAIN MANAGEMENT**

The freezing from your procedure will wear off in 2-3 hours, and you will start to notice some soreness afterwards. This is normally well controlled with over the counter medication. For adults without allergies to these medications, I usually recommend taking Tylenol and Advil together (on a full stomach). These don't interact with each other, have fewer side effects than narcotics, and are quite effective at the doses written below.

### **Recommended Pain Medications** (assuming you don't have allergies or contraindications)

Tylenol (acetaminophen) Extra Strength: 2 tablets (1 gram total), every 4-6 hours as needed

Advil (ibuprofen): 400-600mg, every 6 hours as needed

- These medications can usually be taken together as they do not interact.