

**Dermatology Associates of Kingsport
Mohs Micrographic Surgery**

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WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Taking good care of your wound will make a significant difference in how quickly it heals and will improve the appearance of the eventual scar.

Dressing change once daily:

1. **Wash hands and remove original dressing 24 hours after the completion of your surgery. Sometimes it is helpful to soak the bandage with water if it is sticking to the wound.**
2. **Gently clean wound with regular soap and warm water. Rinse with water and gently pat the wound dry with gauze or a dry cloth. Avoid rubbing the area.**
3. **Apply a thick layer of petrolatum (Vaseline®) ointment (preferred over antibiotic ointment) with a Q-tip.**
4. **Cover the Vaseline® with a piece of the non-stick dressing (cut to fit size of wound). If the wound is large or draining, place some gauze over the non-stick dressing.**
5. **Secure the dressing with paper tape.**

Repeat this process of cleaning and dressing the wound at least once a day until the stitches completely dissolve or are removed. After any oozing/draining has stopped, there is no need for the overlying tape dressing, but you **should continue to keep the wound moist with Vaseline® for at least three weeks.** (If your wound is healing in by itself, or sutures were not used, then the healing process will take several weeks, and the cleaning and Vaseline® routine should be continued on a daily basis until the wound is completely healed.)

What to expect after surgery:

1. Swelling and redness may occur around the wound for several days. Skin around the eyes is often very swollen and bruised for several days.
2. A low-grade fever (99°-100°) may occur, and can be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
3. Expect a small amount of bleeding or oozing in the first 3-4 days. This will be minimized by limiting physical activity for at least the first 48 hours after surgery. **If heavy bleeding occurs, apply firm constant pressure to the dressing with fingertips and a dry, clean wash cloth for 30 minutes. If bleeding continues after 30 minutes of constant pressure, call the doctor. If you are unable to reach the doctor, go to the Emergency Room.**
4. Pain is usually limited to an aching sensation as the local anesthetic wears off. In nearly all cases, extra-strength Tylenol® will relieve this discomfort.
5. **Drainage is to be expected in wounds that are not stitched.** The drainage may be yellow-green and have a slight odor. It usually begins several days after surgery. It is important not to allow the wound bed to dry out - the wound should always be covered with Vaseline®.
6. For the first several days, expect an increase in swelling, redness, and tenderness. After 3-5 days things should start to improve. If after this initial improvement you later notice a return of swelling, redness, tenderness, or drainage you should call our office.

Please call our office with any problems:

423-246-4961 Ext 2273 or 1-800-445-7274 (VA Toll Free) Weekdays 8 AM to 5 PM.

Dr. Thomas' home number is 423-753-0432.