



MEDICAL DERMATOLOGY &  
COSMETIC SURGERY CENTERS

## Pre-operative and Post-operative Care for excisions and Mohs surgeries

NYC **212-661-3376** Plainview **516-433-2424** Smithtown **631-762-3376**  
Hamptons **631-728-7288** Commack **631-543-4888**  
Call 911 in case of emergency; call the office 24/7 for all non-urgent issues

### BEFORE your surgery (pre-op)

#### Planning for your surgery:

- Surgery of the skin involves cutting out an oval piece of skin & stitching *under local anesthesia*.
- Number of stitches and duration of surgery depend on the size and nature of the diagnosis.
- Plan on spending **2 to 4 hours** in the office.
- Have **supplies** ready at home (Tylenol, gauze, tape, vaseline ointment & ace bandage).
- Hold off on travel & exercise for 1-2 weeks.
- Bruising/swelling usually resolves in a week.
- Do NOT take any Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, or any *extra* aspirin for 10 days before or after surgery.
- Know your biopsy or pathology results.
- Additional visits for dressing change, suture removal and scar check are required afterwards.
- Take the rest of the surgical date off from work and consider taking the next day off as well.

#### Schedule a PRE-operative consult, esp. if you:

- have not had previous surgery with the doctor.
- had the initial biopsy in a different office.
- take blood thinners or pre-op antibiotics.
- have a pacemaker or defibrillator.
- have heart valve or joint replacements.
- need surgery on the eyelids, nose, or lips.
- have questions about scarring or stitching.
- have a large skin growth (>1 inch).

#### On the morning of your surgery, you should:

- shower with soap/shampoo to reduce infections.
- continue medications as previously prescribed by your primary care doctor or cardiologist.
- have a big breakfast.
- take your pre-operative medications, if needed.
- have post-operative meds ready, if needed.
- consider having someone else drive.
- bring a book, snacks, drinks and a sweater.

### AFTER your surgery (post-op)

#### Taking care of your surgical site:

- **Day 1-2:** Leave the dressing in place; keep it dry.
- **Day 3-14: ONCE OR TWICE DAILY**, please remove the dressing; wash area with soap and warm water. Dry area with clean gauze. Apply a thick layer of ointment (Vaseline, Aquaphor or Bacitracin). Cover with large bandaid or dressing.
- **Day 7:** Suture removal for facial surgery.
- **Day 14:** Suture removal for scalp and body.
- **Week 4 or 5:** Post-op site check (required).
- If there is any warmth, drainage, pus, blisters, redness (>1 inch), or fever, call the office ASAP
- Additional instructions may be given for wounds with steri-strips, skin grafts, or no suturing.

#### Potential problems after your surgery:

- For **pain**, take 2 extra strength Tylenol (500mg) every 6 hrs; additional meds by prescription only
- For **itching**, apply over-the-counter cortisone 1%
- For **bleeding**, apply pressure with tightly folded gauze directly on wound for 30 mins. Use tape and ace bandage. Slight oozing of blood and a red bandage are normal. If the dressing is dripping with blood, remove and replace. Elevation of site, ice-packs and rest will also help.

#### General post-op advice from your doctor:

- Avoid stretching the sutures, esp. With surgery in areas subject to movement (lip, shoulder, knee). Skin tension can cause scar enlargement.
- Smoking or drinking alcohol impair healing.
- Avoid exercise, swimming or hot tubs until healed.
- Surgical scars will improve with time (3 months), silicone gels, massage, cover-up and sunscreens.
- Call us to discuss **laser-assisted scar improvement** after 1-2 months of healing.