

Wide Local Excision Postoperative Care

Head and Neck Surgical Oncology

Home Care

Incision Care

If you have a dressing, remove it after 24-48 hours. Once dressing is removed and it has been 24-48 hours you may shower. **Do not** let shower hit incision directly. Wash the incision daily with soap and water. Pat dry. **Do not** use alcohol or hydrogen peroxide. **Do not** use any ointment or cream over the incision except for bacitracin. Bacitracin ointment will be used on the incision for the first 3-4 days and then Vaseline will be used on the incision for the remainder of the time that the incision is healing. No dressing is required over the incision. However, if you wish, you may use a dry gauze dressing. If you choose to use a dressing, change it daily. If an Integra matrix dressing was used after surgery, apply bacitracin to wound edges and avoid shower water directly hitting the integra dressing.

Medication

You may not feel pain immediately after procedure due to the local anesthetic that was used prior to the procedure. That feeling may last a few hours after the procedure-this is normal. Tylenol and Ibuprofen should be sufficient for pain control after the procedure. If these medications are not effective in treating your pain please contact the head and neck clinic.

Special Instructions

Some issues may come up that are normal for your type of surgery.

- You may experience numbness over the incision itself or over areas near the incision. This is normal and is most likely temporary.
- It is normal to have a small amount of drainage from the incision after the surgery. This fluid may be blood tinged or clear yellow. Keep the incision covered with a dressing until this stops. Change the dressing daily as noted above.
- Scalp wide local excision- It is normal to have swelling on the bridge of the nose and under the eyes due to fluid collecting under the skin post procedure. This swelling is

Patient Education



temporary and you may use ice or cold spoons on the swollen areas to help decrease the amount of swelling. You may also massage those areas to help the body reabsorb some of the fluid.

- **Call your doctor immediately** if you're having any of the following symptoms:
 - Bleeding from the incision that will not stop. You should hold firm pressure over the area and go to the nearest emergency room.
 - Milky or thick discharge from your incision
 - Separation of the skin at the incision site
 - Temperature of 101°F (38.3°C) or higher
 - Worsening redness around the incision

Follow-up Care

Your follow-up visit will be about 2 weeks after surgery. Your stitches will need to stay in for 2-3 weeks unless otherwise noted by your care team.

Emergency Center

In case of any emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency center. *For non-emergencies during business hours, call our triage line at 904-202-7300 option 4.*

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