

Head and Neck Surgery – Ear, Nose, Throat & Allergy Specialists

The Center for Surgical Care

Postoperative Instructions for Scar Revision and Skin Surgery

When incisions have been made into the skin to remove existing scars or blemishes, the new skin edges are carefully approximated with fine delicate sutures. It takes several days for the wound edges to heal, so the immediate postoperative period is very important in getting the best possible result. Be careful not to injure the area. Some swelling and discoloration can be expected, and this can be minimized by applying an ice pack over the area during the first 48 hours. This can be accomplished by putting several crushed ice cubes in a sandwich bag.

In many situations, a “tape” dressing is used to cover the suture line to protect it. This will be removed at your first post operative visit. Try not to get the tape wet.

In general, we use a dissolvable suture to close the incision line. When the tape dressing is placed over the sutures, the suture material ordinarily comes off when the tape comes off.

When tape is not applied over the incision line, the following procedure should be followed:

- ❖ Using a Q-tip moistened with peroxide, gently swab the suture line.
- ❖ Follow each peroxide treatment with a thin layer of Polysporin® or Bacitracin® Ointment.

This should be done three times per day until the sutures completely dissolve, are removed or until we instruct you to discontinue it. We will usually recommend that you continue this treatment as long as there is ANY crusting along the suture line.

In most patients, make-up may be applied to the areas involved within 2 – 3 days after the tape or sutures are removed. Apply and remove carefully.

Remember: it takes time (6-12 months) for the scar to mature. It will get red and lumpy before it begins to flatten and become lighter in color. Not until it is white and flat is it mature, so be patient.

In most scar revision cases, more than one operation will be necessary in order to obtain the best possible result.

Please notify us if you have any problems such as undue swelling or redness or if you are unsure of any of the instructions you are to follow.