Dr. Michael Kernohan
Ethical Plastic Surgery

Plastic, Reconstructive & Cosmetic Surgeon
MBBS MRCS BDS FDSRCS MSc FRCS(plast) FRACS
Campbelltown - Liverpool - St.Vincent's - Lifehouse
p: 02 8310 4576 | f: 02 8007 0459
e: admin@drmichaelkernohan.com.au

Postop instructions for skin procedures - Non dissolving sutures

The following are some general instructions to help you recover from your operation.
Your wound has been sutured with non dissolving type stitches. It has a dressing in place which is designed to stay there for 2-3 days. After this time you should remove all of the dressings. It is common to have a small amount of blood on the dressing which sets and becomes brown in colour over the first 2 days.

Bleeding
A small amount of ooze is normal over the first 2 days. If there is bleeding that is dripping from the dressing then apply pressure to the area with a clean handkerchief or similar. The pressure should be applied for no less than 20 minutes. If you dab at that it may continue to bleed. If bleeding persists beyond this time then please follow the contact instructions below.

Once your dressings have been removed it is useful to apply a small amount of Vaseline, pawpaw or chlorsig ointment twice a day, your surgeon will advise once the wound has been reviewed. It is normally advisable to keep the wound dry during the second week postop. Avoid submerging it in a bath or allowing a shower to directly blast it.

The area will be quite numb for the next 4 to 6 hours. After that time the local anaesthetic will wear off and you will experience some discomfort. It is advisable to anticipate this by taking a simple painkiller such as paracetamol. Is normal to have some bruising and swelling which normally peaks at 48 hours.

Review appointment will normally be scheduled between 5-10 days after your procedure. The sutures are non dissolving and they will be removed at that visit.

Getting the best scar

From the fourth week onwards some gentle scar massage is very helpful. You will notice the scar tissue building up over the first 4 to 6 weeks. This is the normal wound healing process. Scar massage helps to keep it soft and supple. Between 6 weeks and 3 months most of this lumpiness will resolve. Massage is very helpful to de-sensitize the skin and also to help the scar become soft and pliable. Additional measures including the use of silicone tape or topical silicone ointment can be helpful although the evidence for their use in normal wounds is scanty. Itching tingling or small bolts of pain are common in healing wounds.

FAQs
Is my wound infected?
-It is recommended practice not to automatically prescribe antibiotics for wounds. Wound infection is possible and is more common on the extremities such as a lower leg. All scars are red and tender at 48 hours but from this point forward it should steadily get better. Spreading redness, increasing pain or the presence of pus indicate that you may have a superficial wound infection. See below contact details.

-Wound is bumpy, is this normal?
Is very common that new wounds are bumpy. The skin is normally tense in some areas and often relaxed in others creating irregularities of contour. This almost always settles entirely without any intervention.

Emergency contact instructions

During business hours when the rooms are open please call us on 02 8310 4576 and we will be able to advise. Your local GP practice may also be helpful in these situations but please let us know if there are any problems. Outside of these times and depending on the severity you may need to consider attending your local emergency department or dialling 000. For patient's Southwest Sydney the nearest emergency Department with plastic surgery services is at Liverpool Hospital (02 8738 3000). For patients in Central Sydney or eastern suburbs, your nearest emergency facility with an associated plastic surgery department will be St Vincent's Darlinghurst (02 8382 1111)