



Taking proper care of a wound after a trauma or procedure– including cyst removal, reconstruction after a skin lesion excision, a traumatic repair, or other procedure – will greatly improve the final appearance of the wound. Follow the tips below to ensure that your wound heals as quickly and efficiently as possible.

#1: Keep the wound clean: It is essential to maintain a clean environment around the wound to avoid infection and ensure adequate healing. If a bandage was placed atop the wound you may remove this the evening of the procedure. If surgical tape (“steri-strips”) was placed over the wound, you may leave this in place until it falls off naturally. This may be anywhere from 2 to 5 days after the procedure. Once the steri-strips are no longer covering the wound, follow the ointment application instructions below.

If the wound was not or is no longer covered, be sure to apply ointment at least 3 times daily. This includes Vaseline®, Neosporin®, Bacitracin®, Aquaphor® or other petrolatum-based ointments. Please note that medications such as Bacitracin®, Neosporin®, polymyxin and others contain an antibiotic which may cause a local skin reaction in approximately 5% of the population. If you have used these medications in the past and had no noticeable reaction feel free to use these ointments following the procedure. If you have not, consider Aquaphor® or Vaseline®. Apply the ointment for two weeks following the procedure. Also, if there are crusts forming within or atop the wound you may gently remove them with a Q-tip soaked in 3% hydrogen peroxide. Do not pick at the wound, just gently use the Q-tip to dislodge the crusts so the wound edges are visible before applying additional ointment. If it is painful or bleeding occurs you should allow the crusts to remain in place.

#2: Shower and bathing tips: Do your best to keep the wound dry for 48 hours following the procedure. It takes approximately this much time for the wound to seal. After this, feel free to allow water and soap (and/or hair cleaners and conditioners) to run over the wound, but do not scrub the wound when drying – gently pat it dry with a clean towel.

#3: Swelling and redness: After the procedure, the wound will appear red, raised, and slightly tender. This will last for 2-4 weeks before the wound will begin to settle, to lighten in color, and to become less sensitive to the touch. In the first week following the procedure you can ice the area to decrease swelling every 1-2 hours. Try to keep the area elevated when at rest and take Ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®) and Tylenol® alternating every three hours as needed to combat inflammation and discomfort.

#4: Long-term care: After applying petrolatum-based ointments to the wound for 2 to 3 weeks or until all crusting and/or oozing has completely ceased, you may transition to applying silicone gel sheeting to the dry wound to quicken the transition from a red and raised wound to a pale, thin scar. The full transition takes 6-12 months before the healing process is complete, but you’ll notice a great improvement in the first few months following the procedure. Silicone gel sheeting and ointments are sold at most pharmacies and includes the brand names Kelo-Cote®, ScarAway®, Newgel+®, among others. You may follow the directions on the back of the package.



Make sure to keep the wound out of the sun, or apply sunscreen (SPF30 or above) when exposed to sunlight. This is especially important the first 6 months after the procedure.

After the wound has been allowed 3 weeks to heal and you've begun applying silicone gel sheeting, you may begin to gently massage the wound with clean or gloved hands 3-4 times daily. This involves placing your fingertips atop the wound and gently pushing in a circular motion. This may help to accelerate the healing process.

While many vitamins and minerals are essential for natural, healthy healing (including vitamins A, B, C, E, and zinc), unless you have been diagnosed as having a deficiency in the past by your primary care doctor you likely won't require additional supplementation while healing from your procedure. However, if you have applied vitamin E ointment or Mederma® to wounds in the past and found them beneficial you are free to apply them to your incision beginning two weeks after surgery.

Other instructions:

#5: Handwashing: In the days and weeks after surgery, it is essential to maintain a clean environment to reduce your risk of infection. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds upon waking, before eating or preparing meals, after blowing your nose, coughing and/or sneezing, after touching a pet, cleaning, handling garbage, and especially after using the bathroom. If you are unable to wash your hands, a good but slightly less effective option is to use at least 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizers such as Purell®.

#6: Activity: Depending on the severity of the procedure, it may be helpful to avoid strenuous exercise for 1 to 2 weeks to reduce swelling and allow proper time for recovery. Strenuous exercise increases your cardiac output which may result in prolonged swelling at the surgical site, impaired wound healing, bleeding or other fluid collections. Strenuous exercise includes weight training, high-intensity running (not jogging), and other high-intensity cardio. You are encouraged to take long walks immediately after the procedure as well as maintaining a healthy diet and adequate fluid intake.

#7: Other medications: Some patients will elect to take homeopathic medications starting on the day of the procedure and continuing for days afterwards. These include Arnica montana extract from the flowering plant, or bromelain, an enzyme abundant in pineapples. These medications are over the counter and may provide benefit in reducing swelling and/or bruising following the surgical procedure. Arnica extract can be taken both orally and topically - be sure to follow the instructions provided with the extract.

#8: Scar revisions: As the weeks and months pass following the trauma or procedure, scar adjustments can be performed to decrease the visibility of the wound. **Dr. Markey with Ascentist Aesthetics and Facial Plastics** can carefully evaluate each wound to provide scar revision treatment options. These include: Sciton® Halo™ laser scar revision, anti-inflammatory injections, surgical scar revision, among others. Many scar revision options are available as soon as 6 weeks following the initial trauma or procedure. (Some, but not all, scar revision procedures may be covered by your insurance company. However all Ascentist Ears, Nose and Throat patients are given pricing priority regarding scar evaluation and improvement).