

Aftercare Instructions Following Minor Skin Surgery

Thank you for choosing us for your minor skin surgery. To ensure optimal healing and minimise complications, please follow these aftercare instructions carefully.

1. Wound Care

- **Keep the Dressing Dry and Intact:**

Leave the dressing in place for at least **48 hours** unless instructed otherwise. After this period, you may remove it and replace it with a clean, dry dressing if needed.

- **Facial Steri-Strips:**

If steri-strips were applied to your face, they can remain in place until your follow-up appointment for suture removal (usually **7 days**). If the steri-strips come off before this, it is not a cause for concern. Simply keep the area **clean and dry**.

- **Clean the Wound:**

After 48 hours, gently clean the area once daily with lukewarm water and mild soap. Avoid scrubbing. Pat dry with a clean towel.

- **Ointments:**

Apply a thin layer of clean Vaseline® (or prescribed antibiotic ointment) directly to your wound or stitches using clean hands or a cotton bud if needed. This keeps the area clean, moist, and reduces scab formation.

- **Small Bleeding is Normal:**

It is normal to see a small amount of blood or a light pinkish stain (strike-through) on the dressing during the first 24-48 hours.

- **If Bleeding Continues:**

If the wound continues to bleed:

1. Apply firm pressure with a clean cloth or gauze directly on the wound for **10-15 minutes** without interruption.
2. Elevate the area (if possible).
3. If bleeding persists after 15 minutes of firm pressure or worsens, contact us or seek medical attention.

- **Avoid Picking Scabs:**

Allow scabs to form and fall off naturally. Picking at scabs can delay healing, increase the risk of infection, and lead to more noticeable scarring.

2. Managing Pain and Swelling

- **Pain Relief:**

Take **paracetamol** for pain relief as needed. Avoid ibuprofen or aspirin, as these can increase the risk of bleeding.

- **Minimize Swelling:**

Elevate the area (if possible) and apply a cold compress for 10-15 minutes at a time during the first 24 hours. Avoid applying ice directly to the skin.

3. Activity Restrictions

- **Avoid Strain:**

Refrain from strenuous activities or heavy lifting for at least **5-7 days** or as advised.

- **Protect the Wound:**

Avoid exposing the wound to dirt, water (e.g., swimming pools), or excessive movement that could pull on the stitches.

- **Smoking:**

Try to avoid smoking for at least the first two weeks after your surgery, as it significantly delays wound healing, increases the risk of infection, and may lead to a more noticeable scar.

- **Driving:**

Avoid driving immediately after your procedure if you are experiencing discomfort or reduced mobility. You may resume driving once you feel confident in your ability to operate the vehicle safely and perform emergency manoeuvres without hesitation or pain.

4. Stitches and Healing

- **Stitch Removal:**

If non-dissolvable stitches were used, you will need to return for their removal in **7-14 days**, depending on the site of surgery.

- **Healing Time:**

Most wounds heal within **2-3 weeks**, but redness and firmness around the scar can persist for a few months.

6. Signs of Infection

Watch for the following symptoms and contact us immediately if you experience:

- Increasing redness, swelling, or warmth around the wound.
- Yellow or green discharge or an unpleasant odour.
- Persistent pain or tenderness.
- Fever or chills.

5. Scar Care

Caring for your scar is crucial for achieving the best cosmetic result.

• **Silicone Gel or Strips:**

Once the wound has fully healed (usually 1-2 weeks after surgery), you can begin using silicone gel (e.g., **Kelo-Cote**) or silicone strips. These products help flatten and soften scars and reduce redness. Use as directed, typically applying twice daily for at least 2-3 months.

• **Moisturize:**

Use a fragrance-free moisturizer to keep the area hydrated. Apply gently to avoid irritation.

• **Scar Massage:**

After the wound has healed completely, you can gently massage the scar using circular motions. This improves circulation and softens the scar tissue.

• **Sun Protection:**

Protect the scar from sun exposure for at least **6-12 months**. Use a high-SPF sunscreen (SPF 30+ or higher) or cover the scar with clothing. Sun exposure can darken scars and delay healing.

Contact Information

If you have any concerns, don't hesitate to contact us:

- **Phone:** 0131 376 3785
- **Email:** hello@skinsurgeons.co.uk

For urgent concerns outside of business hours, please dial 111 or attend A&E in an emergency.