

Your surgical wound has been repaired with a full-thickness skin graft. This is done by using skin from one area, usually behind or in front of the ear, to replace tissue lost in another area. To help the new skin that has been placed over the wound to take, you should wear a pressure dressing for the first week after surgery.

Care of the Graft Site

You will have either an attached bolster pressure dressing or a taped pressure dressing.

□ Attached Bolster Pressure Dressing

- A bolster pressure dressing will be stitched onto the graft site. This dressing will stay on for one week. Do not remove it or get it wet.
- A piece of gauze will be taped over the pressure dressing. If the gauze becomes soiled with blood or drainage, you may carefully remove the gauze and replace it with a clean piece.

□ Taped Pressure Dressing

- A pressure dressing will be taped over the graft site. This dressing will stay on for one week. Do not remove it or get it wet.
- You may reinforce the bandage with tape if it becomes loose.

Care of the Donor Site

1. The donor site has either been stitched shut or left open to heal. A pressure bandage is taped over the site to help prevent bleeding. Leave the bandage on and keep it dry. You may remove the bandage in 48 hrs.
2. After removing the bandage, clean the donor site twice a day with hydrogen peroxide and pat dry. Then apply vaseline ointment and a Telfa (non-stick) dressing.
3. You may shower or shampoo and get the sutures on the donor site wet. However, be careful not to get the bolster pressure dressing on your graft wet.

What Is Normal

1. The skin around the graft may appear swollen and bruised for a few days.
2. For the first couple of days, your donor site may be tender and may bleed slightly when doing wound care.
3. A small amount of blood on either dressing is normal.
 - If drainage or bleeding saturates the bandage on the donor site, you will need to apply firm pressure over the bandage for 10 minutes.
 - If drainage or bleeding saturates the bandage on the graft, please call our office at 364-6110.
4. Pain is usually mild. You may take plain or extra strength Tylenol every four hours as needed. Do not take any medicine that contains aspirin or Vitamin E.
5. Avoid alcohol and smoking until you return to clinic to have your stitches removed.