

Care of your wound following **Diagnostic Punch Biopsy of the Skin**

What should I do if I feel any discomfort?

It is normal to you to feel sore and swollen after skin surgery especially when the local anaesthetic wears off (in around one to three hours). We suggest you take paracetamol when you get home, and then as required up to the maximum permitted dose.

Aspirin and Ibuprofen should be avoided unless prescribed by your doctor, as they can increase your risk of post-operative bleeding.

What should I do if my wound bleeds?

Your wound may bleed after surgery.

- If bleeding occurs at home, leave the dressing in place, apply a small pad over the dressing and apply firm continuous pressure for 10 to 20 minutes. We recommend timing this. Do not keep looking to see if the bleeding has stopped, continuous pressure is important.
- If possible, elevate or raise the area, e.g. arm or leg.
- If a small amount of bleeding persists, apply pressure for another 10 minutes.

If you have heavy bleeding that does not stop, contact the Dermatology Department on 01392 405510 Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

After hours/ bank holiday, please attend your local Emergency Department.

How do I care for my wound?

To help reduce the risk of bleeding, infection or poor healing after your surgery, we advise you to,

- Keep your wound dry and covered for 2 to 3 days. Then remove the dressing and wash the wound with tap water and pat dry, follow by application of bland/unperfumed ointment like Vaseline. Repeat this daily until the wound has healed.
- Rest and avoid strenuous activities straight after the procedure and for the next few days.
- Smoking and alcohol should be avoided for 24 hours following your procedure.

If non-dissolving stitches are used **please book an appointment in 5-7 days with the practice nurse to remove your stitches.**

What should I do if my wound becomes infected?

As with any surgery, there is a risk of infection. If this occurs, it generally happens within 3 to 7 days after the surgery.

Signs of infections can be any of the following:

- Increasing pain at the site
- Redness
- Swelling
- Heat
- Leakage of pus / blood stained fluid.

If you are concerned about any of the above, see your practice nurse promptly. The practice nurse will be able to assess your wound if you suspect it is infected. If your practice nurse has concerns they can contact us.

When will I know my pathology result?

It takes on average 4 weeks to have the results back in the department after your surgery. We will be in touch with the results. If after six weeks you have not heard from us, please contact the Dermatology Department on 01392 405510.

Contact us:

If you have any questions please contact the Dermatology Department, Level 1, Royal Devon University Hospital (Heavitree), Gladstone Road, Exeter, EX1 2ED

Our phone number: 01392 405510

Alternative number: 01392 405516 (Leave a message for a member of the nursing team to contact you)

Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm

Useful websites for support / further information:

- www.skinhealthinfo.org.uk
- www.macmilan.org.uk
- www.dermnet.org.nz

If you still need help with information, advice or support, you can contact the Royal Devon University Hospital Patient Advice and Liaison Service.

rduh.pals-eastern@nhs.net

Tel: 01392 302093

This information can be offered in other formats on request, including a language other than English and Braille.

RD&E (Eastern Services) main switchboard: 01392 411611 NDDH (Northern Services) main switchboard: 01271 322577

For Royal Devon services log on to: <https://royaldevon.nhs.uk>

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