

Skin Surgical Procedures Undertaken at the Treatment Centre

Information for patients following discharge from the Treatment Centre

- The local anaesthetic will wear off in one to two hours. You will experience discomfort. It is a good idea to take painkillers, such as paracetamol
- If your wound begins to ooze, by gently applying pressure for 10 – 20 minutes should stop this. However, if you take blood thinning medication, for example aspirin, clopidogrel, warfarin, apixaban, dabigatran, rivaroxaban, you should apply firm pressure for about 30 minutes only
- **If you have had a skin graft to your leg or arm and the wound begins to ooze, apply a bandage over the dressing**
- **If you have had a skin graft elsewhere on your body, apply a pad and a dressing over the wound area. Applying firm pressure over a skin graft may damage the graft**
- Try and keep the area clean and dry for as long as possible. If the dressings get wet, please change

Care of leg wounds:

- Elevate your legs as much as possible, for example sitting with your legs up on a stool for the first 24 hours after the procedure. This will reduce the swelling and improve healing
- Wearing support stockings or a bandage for the next two to four weeks can help wound healing
- Avoid vigorous or strenuous exercise until your wound has healed and your stitches have been removed
- There will usually be stitches which will need to be removed at your GP surgery – the surgeon will confirm the length of time before the stitches will need removing. Please organise the appointment with the Practice Nurse at your GP surgery and not with your GP

Care of skin grafts:

- You will have a heavily padded dressing on both areas – the donor area where the skin graft has been taken from and the surgical area where the skin graft has been applied
- Please do not remove the pad or dressings until the surgeon has seen you in the clinic one to two weeks after your procedure
- If the skin graft is on your leg, your leg should be kept elevated where possible and your walking may be restricted
- If the skin graft is on your foot, ankle or near a joint, you may have a plaster splint to immobilise the grafted area and you may need crutches to walk. The crutches will be loaned to you and must be returned to the Treatment Centre when no longer required

- The donor area where the skin graft has been taken from is likely to cause more discomfort than the surgical area where the skin graft has been applied
- You can use moisturising creams over the grafted and donor area once the dressings have been removed and the area is healed
- Healing times for the grafted area and donor area are usually about two to four weeks. However, it may take longer if there is infection, or if the graft has not taken. Also the following may delay wound healing:
 - Chronic conditions, such as diabetes, ischaemic legs, swollen legs
 - Medication which reduces the body's ability to fight infection, for example, steroids or other immunosuppressants

Results:

- The Dermatology Department will send a letter to you and your GP informing you of the results of your procedure
- It can take up to four weeks to receive your results. If you have not received your results six weeks from the date of your procedure, please telephone the Dermatology Department on 01270 612384. (Please leave a message if needed, including your name, hospital number and a contact telephone number)
- If you are invited back for an appointment to discuss your results, you are welcome to bring a friend or relative with you

When should I seek help?

- If you develop a temperature above 38.5⁰ C or chills
- Persistent vomiting or nausea
- Increasing pain, redness, swelling or discharge of any of the wound sites
- Severe bleeding

If you have any questions or queries, please contact the Dermatology Department on 01270 612384.

This information is available in audio, Braille, large print and other languages. To request a copy, please telephone 01270 612384.