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## Caring for Your Skin Wound

Your doctor has removed a small piece of your skin. The piece will be sent to the laboratory for testing. In order to prevent infection, promote wound healing, and help the scar look as good as possible, please follow these steps:

### Keeping the area clean

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- Before you leave the office, your surgery area may have been covered with an antibiotic ointment and/or a bandage.
- The bandage should be removed each day, and the area cleaned with clean water and a soft facecloth.
- Apply a fresh coat of antibiotic ointment over the area and put on a new bandage. Do this every day until the scab falls off, usually one or two weeks.
- Over-the-counter antibiotic ointment (such as polysporin or store brand) can be purchased at any pharmacy, or your doctor can prescribe prescription antibiotic ointment.
- It is **very important** not to pick at the scab or scratch it off. The scab will fall off on its own when it is ready, and it is important for you to leave the scab attached to the skin for as long as possible. If the scab is scratched off too early, a scar may result.

### What to do if there is bleeding

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The doctor will have stopped any areas of bleeding before you leave the office. However, sometimes there may be a small amount of bleeding later that day. If you have bleeding:

- Place a clean cloth or tissue on the area and press down firmly on the area for about 10 minutes without peeking.
- After 10 minutes, check to see if the bleeding has stopped. If not, repeat the procedure for another 10 minutes. This will almost always stop the bleeding.
- If the bleeding still will not stop, then you may need medical attention. If it is during the daytime, please call our office at 428-5554 and we will arrange to see you again to stop the bleeding. If it is the evening or weekend, you may need to attend a medicentre or emergency department to stop the bleeding.

### If you have stitches

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If you have stitches, then they will need to be removed at a later date:

- Stitches on the face should be removed 5 to 7 days after the surgery.
- Stitches on other parts of the body should be removed 10 to 14 days after the surgery.

It is best to have a doctor or nurse who has the special tools remove these stitches. Please do not attempt to do this yourself, unless you have the tools and experience to properly remove stitches.