

Graft Care Instructions

You have had surgery that involved the placement of a graft where your cancer was removed. The bandage that has been put on by the nurse should **remain in place** until you return to the clinic. There may be some post-op oozing, and this may stain the bandage. This is normal. If, however, you have excessive bleeding, i.e. bright red soaking through the bandage and bright red, follow these steps:

Apply **constant and direct pressure** to the site for at least **15-20 minutes without releasing pressure** to look at the site. Use a clean washcloth or small towel. You may wrap the towel around ice to also help with the bleeding. If the bleeding continues and soaks through the towel or washcloth after applying pressure for 2 hours, call the office at **352-332-4442**.

Special care must be taken with your graft sites. It is very important to not disturb the blood flow that is needed for the graft to survive. Treat it very gently. How you take care of the graft will greatly affect how it heals.

You will return for a wound check 48-72 hours after your surgery. **DO NOT** change the dressing. We will do it for you when you return.

Be sure to sleep with your head **elevated** using a few pillows under your head. Do not bend over. You must keep your head up above your heart.

After your wound check, you should change the dressing **daily**. Be very gentle when removing the dressing. Wash it gently with soap and water. Apply Polysporin and a fresh dressing daily. We want the Polysporin to keep the graft moist to avoid scabbing or crusting.

Graft sites are very fragile. The most important things to remember are:

1. Try **not** to move the graft any more than necessary. If the graft is on the nose, do not blow your nose and be careful when sneezing.
2. Keep **Polysporin** ointment on the graft so it stays moist and does not dry out. You do **not** want it to form a scab. A scab will impede healing and increase the risk of the graft not surviving.
3. **Take the antibiotics** we prescribed for you. Antibiotics are to be taken as directed until all the medication is gone.

You will return in one to two weeks for suture removal on the donor site. We will also recheck your graft. Your next follow-up visit will depend on how the graft looks at that time.

***** NOTE: Procyte™ Copper Complex** is available for purchase (\$20) for patients interested in maximizing the cosmetic outcome of his/her surgical scar. Please ask the nurse or check-out staff for this product if you are interested.