WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS – ABSORBABLE SUTURES/TAPED

We have used dissolving sutures/stitches to close your wound. A return suture removal appointment will not be necessary.

MATERIALS:
1. tap water
2. Q-tips
3. ½ inch or 1 inch paper tape
4. gauze
5. non-stick dressing pads (i.e. Telfa)
6. petrolatum (i.e. Vaseline)

WOUND CARE:
The dressing you have been sent home with is called a pressure dressing. It should remain in place for 24 hours. The pressure dressing consists of several pieces of white gauze secured with white or flesh/tan colored tape.

Do not wet the pressure dressing for 24 hours. After that you may shower but do not let the forceful stream of the shower hit the wound directly. The first day the wound may be tender and may bleed slightly or seep a small amount of clear fluid.

After 24 hours, remove the pressure dressing. There will be a flesh/tan colored piece of tape that is directly over the stitches. Please try to keep the tape on for 5-7 days. As long as the tape remains in place, no wound care or dressing is necessary.

If the tape comes off before seven days, perform wound care as follows. The suture line should be cleansed daily with tap water. You may gently loosen any crusts with a Q-tip and pat dry. After cleansing the wound, apply a thin layer of Vaseline over the stitches. Cover the wound with a non-stick dressing cut to the necessary size. Tape the dressing in place with paper tape.

One week after your surgery date remove the flesh colored tape that is directly over the sutures. Most/many of the beige colored dissolving sutures will pull out when the tape is removed. You should take a Q-tip moistened with tap water and cleanse the suture line. Any remaining sutures should fall out in the next several days. If they do not, cut and remove them with tweezers or scissors. Sometimes, a light scrub with a washcloth will remove them. No further wound care is necessary at this point.

BLEEDING:
Careful attention has been given to your wound to prevent bleeding. The initial dressing you have on is a pressure dressing to also help prevent bleeding.

You may notice a small amount of blood on the edges of the dressing the first day and this is normal. If bleeding is persistent and saturates the dressing, apply firm, steady pressure over the dressing with gauze for 20 minutes. If bleeding continues, repeat pressure for an additional 20 minutes. If bleeding persists, call the doctor or go to the nearest Emergency Room while continuing to hold pressure on the wound. Marked swelling at the surgical site may indicate blood accumulation and the doctor should be notified.

**CONTINUED ON BACK SIDE**
PAIN:
Post-operative pain is usually minimal. Plain Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol, two tablets every 4 hours, usually relieves any pain you may have. If needed, apply an ice pack (or frozen bag of vegetables) over the dressing the first 24 hours every 2-3 hours for 20 minutes. This will relieve swelling, help minimize bruising and also lessen pain. After the first 24 hours, apply warm, moist soaks a few minutes a day if bruised and swollen.

APPEARANCE:
There may be swelling and bruising around the wound, especially if near the eyes. The area may feel firm and swollen (but will gradually soften and return to normal appearance over time). The suture line may appear bright pink to purple and the edges of the wound may be reddened. This will lighten day by day. Slight tenderness to touch is normal. If the wound develops increasing pain, redness, heat, swelling or pus-like drainage, call the office. Those are signs of infection.

As your surgical site heals, you may have occasional sharp brief pains. Itching is common but if severe and associated with a rash, call the office. Numbness may be present but slowly fades away over several months. Not uncommonly, the absorbable stitches under the skin may cause a one or more small, red pimples to appear along the incision line. In general this is an annoyance but will not interfere with final wound healing. If the stitch can be easily seen, it may be removed with a small clean scissors and tweezers.

DO NOT TAKE ANY MEDICATION CONTAINING ASPIRIN, IBUPROFEN OR SIMILAR NON-STEROIDAL PAIN MEDICATIONS, BLOOD THINNERS OR DRINK ANY ALCOHOL 3 DAYS AFTER SURGERY (unless otherwise instructed). Continue to take all other prescribed medication.

NOTES:
1. If the wound site is near the eye, saline eyewash may be used on a Q-tip to clean the corner of the eye and eyelids.

2. Make sure you clean your scissor with alcohol before each dressing change.

3. You may have a low-grade fever (99-100°F) for which Tylenol may be used.

4. You may have some clear drainage from the wound. This will stop after a few days. If not, please call the office.

IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE @ (406) 587-4432 ON WEEKENDS OR EVENING HOURS CALL YOUR PHYSICIAN AT HOME:

DR. AARON BRUCE (Cell): (727)804-8922