



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Instructions following Facial Skin Surgery

Including wound care

Maxillofacial Clinic

① For more information, please contact: Mon-Fri 9-5pm

Maxillofacial Team for Scarborough

Telephone: 01723 342113

Scarborough Hospital

Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QL

Or

Maxillofacial Team for York

Telephone: 01904 631313

Appointments: 01904 721368

York Hospital, Wigginton Road, York, YO31 8HE

Or Email us at yhs-tr.headandneckadmin@nhs.net

Introduction

Later today, if you feel any pain or discomfort where you have had surgery, take painkillers as you would for a headache (i.e., Paracetamol/Ibuprofen); follow the recommended dosages as directed on the packet.

Your wound may bleed a little as the local anaesthetic wears off, or if it is knocked. Use a clean piece of gauze, slightly damp/moist with clean water or a cotton hanky and apply firm, constant pressure for 10 to 20 minutes without removing the pressure. Please **do not** keep taking the pressure off to see what is happening.

Keep the wound clean and moist; we will give you a tube of antibiotic (chloramphenicol) ointment to apply three to four times a day to the wound. To reduce the risk of infection, remove the old ointment each time with clean hands and a tissue. Gently wash the wound to remove any crusting, pat it dry and then re-apply the ointment (it is labelled “eye-ointment” but you can use it for other parts of skin). If we do not give you ointment, you can use a fresh tube of Vaseline instead.

Do not get shampoo, shower gel or soap onto the wounds/stiches. Do not scrub the wound or stiches. If the wound, gets damp then dab it dry with a clean towel and reapply the ointment. You may wash, shower, and wash your hair (baby shampoo). Gentle washing of the wound will promote healing and make stich removal easier.

Skin Grafts

If you have had a skin graft placed, it will be covered by a yellow pack or foam dressing, which is stitched or stapled in place. It should stay in place until your stitches are removed. The aim of the dressing is to prevent undue movement of the skin graft whilst it is healing.

Wash and shower as required but keep the pack dry. Gently wash around the area to remove crusting or dry blood.

Apply the ointment around the pack.

Stitch and Pack Removal

We use two types of stitches, some will dissolve, and the others will require removal. Stitches on the face will usually be removed after 7 - 10 days.

Packs and skin clips will be removed in 10-14 days after surgery.

You will be advised on discharge, what type of stitches (sutures) you have and when your clips and or packs will need removing in the nurse led wound clinic.

Management of facial scars

Any surgery to the skin will leave a scar, however small. There is no such thing as invisible mending!

Scars take up to 18 months to settle down. They go through various stages and initially they are red, hard, itchy, and raised. It takes time before they become lighter in colour and soften, to feel like normal skin.

Scars may benefit from creams and massage. Some patients produce excess scar tissue during the healing process. There are specialist silicone-based wound dressing products available, which may help with difficult scars.

Infection

Even after the stitches are removed or dissolved, the wound can be infected. If your wound becomes swollen, bright red or sore, or if there is any pus (discharge) coming out of the area, it is probably infected. If this happens, contact the clinic or see your GP.

Will I get my results?

We will either discuss your surgery results during a follow up nurse wound clinic, outpatient appointment or we would write to you whichever is appropriate.

What will happen at this appointment?

The surgical pressure pack covering some wounds has removable sutures; these are removed at your visit to the nurse led wound clinic. Any sutures left are dissolvable; these can take six to eight weeks to fully dissolve. Some scalp procedures require closure with a large stitch called “round block” these remain in place for four to six weeks.

How should I care for my wound site?

It is important to keep the wound massaged and moisturised. You can do this by using short circular finger movements using one of the following: Vaseline, E45 or a simple moisturising product such as Nivea. If you prefer an oil, then Baby or Bio oil is recommended. This will reduce swelling, help dissolving sutures to break down and generally improve the lumpiness of scar tissue.

How long will it take to fully heal?

Scarring will continue to heal for 12-18 month's, regular massaging and moisturising will help the overall appearance. At the end of 12-18 months your wound is fully healed, and the appearance of scarring tissue is unlikely to further improve.

Contact Numbers

Please telephone if you have any concerns:

If you have been treated in York:

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|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| York Hospital | 01904 631313 | (bleep 861) |
| Ward 26 | 01904 726026 | 24 Hours |
| Day Unit | 01904 726010 | 8.30am-5.30pm |
| Surgical assessment Unit | 01904 726417 | overnight |

If you have been treated in Scarborough:

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|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Department phone | 01723 342113 |
| Secretary | 01723 342082 |
| Day Unit (Ash/Willow ward) | 01723 385209 |
| A&E | 01723 342145 |

Further information

Following skin surgery, you will be encouraged to take care whilst enjoying the sunshine. A wide brimmed hat is encouraged and at least a factor 30 or above when applying sun protection.

In the event of concerns or questions regarding the healing of the wounds during this process, please contact us using the details on the front of this leaflet.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:
Maxillofacial Clinic, York Hospital, Wigginton Road,
York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 721368 or email
yhs-tr.headandneckadmin@nhs.net.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services. PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net. An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:
www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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