

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Each person heals differently. Occasionally a second "touch-up" procedure is necessary to get the best result. If scars continue to thicken after the first 6 weeks, call the office for an appointment.

The final phase of healing (scar maturation) normally takes 6-12 months and sometimes longer in young people. Scars normally begin to improve and fade beginning 3-4 weeks after surgery.

When removing cancers or tumors, Dr. Black tries to get the best reconstruction possible at the time. There are limitations, mainly based on maintaining enough blood vessels to allow healing. Frequently a second stage of reconstruction is necessary to get the best result. If needed, this second stage is usually performed 6-12 months after the original procedure.

Please follow these special instructions also:

HOW TO CARE FOR CAUTERIZED AREAS

If you have sites that were cauterized (or "burned off"), remove dressings the day after surgery unless instructed differently. Apply antibiotic ointment once or twice daily to keep crusts from getting too dry. Polysporin or Bacitracin are the preferred ointments.

You may gently wash these areas with bar soap and water and blot dry when you normally wash. Do not pick at crusts. Apply antibiotic ointment each time these areas get wet.

You may wear bandaids to protect these areas as needed. Please protect them if the areas are prone to be rubbed (one example is the upper nose where eyeglasses rub). Flexible, cloth bandaids are preferred.

These areas normally heal in 10-14 days with some redness remaining longer. Surrounding redness is normal but should not increase in size after the third day. If it does, call the office.

HOW TO CARE FOR DERMABRADED AREAS

Leave the dressings in place and dry until removed by Dr. Black. If the dressing comes off, put antibiotic ointment on the site and replace the dressing immediately.

Call if you have any questions.

402-552-2200

Toll-Free 1-800-950-8825

Doctors Building 4239 Farnam Street * Suite 219 South *
Omaha, NE 68131

Clarkson West Medical Center 2727 S. 144th St. * Suite 100 *
Omaha, NE 68144

www.drblack.com

Patient Information

SUTURES

Steven B. Black, M.D., FACS

Certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery



**Plastic Surgical
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Specializing in You*

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR STITCHES AND INCISION

Your incision and the stitches will need some special care for several days following your operation. Please read this paper carefully. If there is something that you do not understand, please ask us. These guidelines help achieve the least noticeable scar possible.

402-552-2200

Discomfort

AVOID ASPIRIN PRODUCTS unless Dr. Black approves. Aspirin (and Advil) increase tendency to bleed or bruise. Tylenol 2 extra strength tablets every 4 hours as needed usually controls pain. If stronger medication is needed and was not prescribed for you, please call the office.

Let your incision rest

Keep stretching and movement near the incision to a minimum. This lack of stretching and motion help it to heal with a narrow scar. If you have an incision on your face, you need to eat soft foods without extra chewing and not chew gum. Incisions do not reach full strength for 6 weeks after surgery so be careful about stretching even after the sutures are removed.

What to put on your incision

After you remove the dressings for the first time, apply a thin film of antibiotic ointment once a day to the stitches. Polysporin or Bacitracin ointment is preferred (Betadine ointment on the feet). The ointment should be applied to the incision only; you do not need to put the ointment on the skin around the incision. These ointments are available without a prescription.

Do not use any other medications on the site unless approved by Dr. Black. Especially, **DO NOT USE RUBBING ALCOHOL, BACTINE OR PEROXIDE ON YOUR INCISION.** These solutions damage and irritate healing tissue unnecessarily.

Facial incisions usually heal better if they are kept dry (except for ointment). Incisions near lips and eyes may need ointment more frequently. Avoid caps or hats near forehead incisions. Protect upper nose incisions from eyeglasses with a bandaid until thoroughly healed. Men may shave but should use a small scissors to trim near the incision.

If incisions are in the scalp, you may shampoo the day after surgery unless instructed differently. Then shampoo only every third day until sutures and crusts are gone. Do not use a dandruff shampoo.

If you see redness or have more pain

Most incisions get a little red and painful for the first 2-3 days. If you notice increasing pain and redness after that time, please call the office. Although infection is unusual, it may occur.

Antibiotics are not needed for most surgical incisions but if they are prescribed, they must be taken exactly as directed.

If your incision itches

Itching is a normal part of healing. If the itching in your incision bothers you or keeps you awake at night, you may take 2 Tylenol tablets or apply a cold compress (cool wet washcloth, or ice bag wrapped in a towel) on the area. If the itching is severe or a rash develops, call Dr. Black's office at 402-552-2200. Do not scratch the area.

When can the stitches come out?

The timing for removing the stitches can be critical in terms of scarring. Please be understanding if your doctor thinks you have to return more than once for suture removal.

Healing takes place over several months

Many months are needed for an incision to fully heal. It is not uncommon for scars to thicken and turn red within the first three weeks after surgery. They usually start to lighten and soften after the fourth week. We need to monitor the progress of your healing and we normally request patients return to the office for a recheck at six weeks after surgery. We normally don't charge for the visits during the first six weeks unless unusual events have occurred and you require care.