

CHESTER COUNTY OTOLARYNGOLOGY AND ALLERGY ASSOCIATES

A DIVISION OF PINNACLE EAR, NOSE AND THROAT ASSOCIATES

Adult and Pediatric Ear, Nose and Throat and Allergy Evaluation and Treatment

Andrew V. Chuma, MD
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Head and Neck Cancer Surgery
Thyroid & Parathyroid Surgery
Sinus Surgery
Allergy Evaluation and Treatment
Audiology and Hearing Aids

POST OPERATIVE GENERAL SKIN INCISION/WOUND CARE

Visibility of a scar or incision in the skin is dependent on a number of factors. Some of these factors include the location of the scar, the nature of the incision or wound, the type of reconstruction needed to close the wound, your own body's healing powers and how you care for it afterwards. Wounds that involve infections or trauma usually heal more visibly than do clean incisions. Incisions closed under tension (where there is little loose skin for closure or if a lot of tissue was removed) are more likely to be wider and more visible.

Keep in mind that although wounds and incisions do most of their healing and strengthening in the first 4-8 weeks, they continue to heal for up to a year.

The following are some recommendations for incision/wound care.

- 1) Do not wash the wound for 48 hours. Keep it well lubricated with the antibiotic ointment prescribed. If the wound oozes a bit, keep the hardened scabs moist with the ointment.
- 2) After 3 days, you may begin to wash it gently with warm water soapy. It is very important to prevent scabs from forming. Hard scabs cause the wound to heal with a wider appearance.
- 3) Do not put any stress on the incision.
- 4) Sun exposure will darken incisions and make them more visible. Use sunscreen (SPF 30, UVA & UVB) liberally for the next few months after you surgery (all year, not just in the warmer, sunnier weather). Skin cancer will occur in 20% of the population so daily sunscreen is a good idea anyway.
- 5) DO NOT SMOKE. Aside from its obvious health effects, smoking impairs wound healing, increases the risks of bleeding and infection and leads to much more visible and noticeable scars.
- 6) Take the medication prescribed, including the antibiotic.
- 7) If bleeding occurs, apply gentle pressure for 5-10 minutes.
- 8) Bruising is normal and can be quite extensive, especially if you are on or have been on Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Coumadin or other blood-thinning products before surgery. All bruising should resolve within 1-2 weeks. Avoid these medications for one week before and after surgery unless your Doctor has instructed you otherwise.
- 9) If you have ANY problems, questions or concerns before or after your surgery, please call the office.

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