

Donor area and skin graft aftercare

Patient Information



What is a donor area?

A donor area is where the skin was taken from, to cover your wound.

Dressings

During the operation, a white dressing (called Mefix) was put directly onto the wound. To manage excess fluid, two further dressings were applied, a blue gauze followed by another layer of the white Mefix dressing.



Care of your dressings / wound

Once the oozing has stopped, usually after 48 hours, the top two dressings can be removed (top layer of the white dressing and the blue gauze underneath) leaving you with one layer of the white Mefix dressing (see below)



Once the top two dressings have been removed, you should then wash over the white dressing every day with soap and water. Pat off excess moisture and leave open to the air to dry. Do not be tempted to cover the white dressing. Do not be tempted to cover the white dressing.

If the area still oozes fluid, step up the washing to two or three times a day. This will help to get rid of any excess fluid and the white dressing will eventually dry.



As the edges start to lift off these should be trimmed back to prevent catching on your bedding and clothes.

If the wound starts to smell or the surrounding skin starts to become red and painful. Increase the washing to night and morning. If this doesn't improve contact the team on the number listed below.



Once the area has healed fully the white dressing will fall off.

This can take up to six weeks.

Once healed, the area may appear dry. You can use a non-perfumed moisturiser two to three times a day to help keep the area soft.

Grafted area aftercare

- The grafted area must be raised when sitting and if the graft is on a leg you should avoid standing for long periods of time.
- Daily activities should be increased gradually over two to three weeks.

- You or your carer/relative will be shown how to change the appropriate dressings for the graft site. A letter and dressings for your GP practice nurse/district nurse will be given, if required.
- Avoid pressure or friction which may tighten blood supply and result in blisters, as grafts are very fragile.
- Once dressings are no longer required, you may take baths or showers. Since the grafted skin does not produce its own oil, it should be massaged gently with a non-perfumed moisturising cream 2-3 times per day until dryness and scaling has disappeared. It takes many months for the oil glands to recover.
- Sunlight must be avoided. Apply total sun block to the area if you cannot avoid exposure.
- Initially grafts do not look like normal skin. They may be red, purple or various shades of pink and can take several months to fade.

Who to contact if worried?

Should you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Plastics Outreach Service:

Service Co-ordinator 01342 414124 (Monday-Friday 9am - 5pm)

Megan Harwood, Clinical Nurse Specialist 07833 285945

Sophie Kirk, Clinical Nurse Specialist 07827895578

Please leave a message on the answerphone, giving your name and contact details, as the nurse may be driving or attending a patient.

Email address: qvh.plasticsoutreach@nhs.net

Please ask if you
would like this leaflet
in larger print or an
alternative format.

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