



Dressing Changes

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Your surgeon may ask you to change your dressing at home. Wound drainage and dead tissue can be removed when you take off the old dressing. Your doctor will tell you how often you should change your dressing at home. As the wound heals, you should not need as much gauze (or packing gauze).

Removing the Old Dressing

- Wash your hands before and after each wound dressing change.
- Put on a pair of non-sterile gloves.
- Carefully remove the tape.
- Remove the old dressing. If it is sticking to your skin, wet it with warm water to loosen it
- Remove the gauze pads or packing strip from inside your wound.
- Put the old dressing, packing material, and your gloves in a plastic bag. Dispose bag.

Cleaning Your Wound

- Use a soft washcloth to gently clean your wound with warm water and soap. Your wound should not bleed much when you are cleaning it, but a small amount of blood is okay. Rinse your wound with water, and gently pat dry with a clean towel. **Do not rub it dry.** In some cases, you can even rinse the wound while showering.
- Check the wound for
 - Increased redness or swelling
 - A bad odor
 - Drainage that is darker or thicker
 - Color of drainage and amount

Changing Your Dressing

- Moist to dry dressing change Daily Twice a day as needed

Moisten gauze. Squeeze the water/saline from the gauze/packing strip until it is no longer dripping.

Place the moist gauze/packing strip in your wound. Gauze ½" packing ¼" packing

- Carefully fill in the wound and any space under the skin.
- Do not let the wet gauze/packing strip touch any healed skin
- Cover the moist gauze with a dry dressing pad. Use tape to hold dressing in place.
- Put all used supplies in a plastic bag. Close it securely and dispose in trash.
- Wash hands again when you are finished.

- Dry Dressing Change Daily Twice a day as needed

- Carefully fill in the wound with dry gauze and any space under the skin.
- Cover with another dry dressing pad. Use tape to hold dressing in place.
- Put all used supplies in a plastic bag. Close it securely and dispose in trash.
- Wash hands again when you are finished.

- Remove packing and leave wound open to air after 24 hours after 48 hours after 72 hours

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor if you have any of these changes around your incision:

- Worsening or more redness
- More pain
- Swelling
- Bleeding
- The wound is larger or deeper
- The wound looks dried out or dark
- The drainage is increasing
- The drainage has a bad odor or change in color
- Fever is 101.5 or higher

Frequently asked questions

1. Can I use water from my sink?

- a. You can use city water but DO NOT USE WELL WATER. Bottled water is fine to use.

2. Where can I find plain packing strips?

- a. You can find plain packing strips (Nugauze) at
Home Care America in the Westwood Shopping Center
2017 Plank Road Fredericksburg, VA
540-741-3538, Hours: Mon-Fri: 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

3. Can I shower?

- a. Yes, you can shower. It is ok to shower the day after your procedure. Remove dressing prior to shower. Shower like you normally would, letting the soap and water run over the wound. Rinse your wound with water, and gently pat dry with a clean towel. **Do not rub it dry.**

4. Do I need anything for pain?

- a. You may take Tylenol or Motrin for pain management or discomfort
- b. You can also take Tylenol or Motrin 30-45 minutes prior to dressing change to help with any discomfort.

5. Should I put anything on the wound?

- a. NO! Leave it alone! Please do not apply any creams, ointments, Neosporin, or Peroxide to wound.

6. Can I go swimming?

- a. Please no swimming, hot tubs, or baths until your wound is healed.

7. Who should I call if I have questions?

- a. You can speak to a nurse during office hours. If you need to contact someone after hours or on a weekend, please call the office number and our answering service will contact the surgeon on call.