

Care of Your Incision After a Breast Biopsy

The goal for care of your incision is to prevent an infection. Your incision can be covered in a variety of ways. You may have:

- A gauze dressing over your incision. Your surgeon will decide when this dressing should be removed. Do not get it wet. When you are permitted to shower, remove the dressing before you shower. Under the gauze dressing, your surgeon has placed Steri-Strips®. These are paper tapes that cover your incision. They will fall off by themselves (do not remove them). It is okay for them to get wet in the shower. If they have not fallen off after 7 to 10 days, your surgeon will remove them during your follow up visit.
- A clear, waterproof “glue” called Dermabond® applied directly over your incision. It will dissolve on its own.

You may shower in _____hours. Gently clean the area around the incision with soap and water. Rinse well using a gentle stream of water. Pat the incision dry.

Inspect the incision in front of a mirror.

You may notice:

- Slight redness.
- Swelling.
- Tenderness.
- Some slight blood staining on the Steri-Strips.
- Black and blue discoloration.

These are normal effects of surgery and may last a few days.

Comfort Measures

- Take your pain medicine as needed.
- Wear a bra for comfort and support when you are awake and when you sleep. It will help to reduce the tension on the incision.
- Apply an ice pack for 15-20 minutes every 2 hours for the first couple of days. Place the ice pack in a plastic bag and wrap it in a paper towel. This is to prevent an ice burn on the area.

Special Point

- Call your doctor for a follow-up appointment.

Call Your Doctor If You Have Any Questions, Or If You Notice:

- Increasing redness or pressure.
- Skin that is hot to the touch.
- Drainage from the incision.
- A temperature above 101° F (38.3° C).

Doctor: _____

Telephone: _____

Nurse: _____

Telephone: _____

After 5 p.m. or on the weekend, call (212) 639-7900 and ask for the breast fellow on call.



Memorial Sloan-Kettering
Cancer Center

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