

Self-Care after Nipple/Areola Reconstruction Using Skin Graft

Care of the Reconstructed Nipple/Areola Using Skin Graft

- Do not wet, disturb, or change the chest dressing. This will interfere with the healing of the skin graft.
- Your first post-operative visit is _____ days after surgery. During this visit, your doctor or nurse will change your dressing.
- You may have a second post-operative visit a few days later for additional dressing changes.
- You will be told when to take your first full shower after the skin graft has been evaluated.
- Avoid friction on the reconstructed nipple area and donor site incision line for two weeks. This means you should not use a shoulder strap on the affected side. Pad your seat belt strap in a car if it falls across your reconstructed nipple/areola.

Care of the Suture Line in the Donor Site

- Typical donor sites include groin and/or lower abdomen. Other sites may be chosen by you or your surgeon.
- You may shower 48 hours after your surgery **from the waist down only**. The suture line in the donor area must be kept dry for only 48 hours.
- The suture line in the donor area may be tender and may feel tight during the first 48 hours after surgery. If you have pain or discomfort after surgery, you may take _____, as prescribed by your doctor.

General Instructions

- You may resume your normal activities such as walking. Do not do vigorous exercise such as jogging or jumping until your doctor tells you it is safe.
- For the first two weeks, be sure that a car's safety belt is not directly over the reconstructed nipple area. Pad your seat belt if necessary.

Call Your Doctor or Nurse If You Develop:

- Redness, warmth, increased pain, or all of these, over the nipple/areola area.
- Any drainage, oozing, or separation of the underlying dressing.
- Temperature above 98.6° F (37° C.)
- Shaking chills.
- Shortness of breath or any difficulty breathing.
- Symptoms of a cold or the flu.
- Any type of skin infection anywhere on your body.

Doctor: _____

Telephone: _____

Nurse: _____

Telephone: _____

After 5 P.M. and on weekends, call 212-639-7900 and ask for the Plastic Surgery resident on call.



Memorial Sloan-Kettering
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