



**The Leeds
Teaching Hospitals**
NHS Trust

Having a skin surgery operation

Information for patients

This leaflet aims to help you and your family understand more about your treatment and how to manage this on your discharge from hospital.

This leaflet will provide you with general information and what to expect during your healing process. It will also provide you with information on dressings, wound care management and clinic appointments.

If you have any other questions that the leaflet does not answer or would like a further explanation, please ask your Surgeon or ward staff prior to discharge.

Contents

- Contacts
- Split Skin Grafts
- Wider excisions and Local flaps
- Dressing information
- Drain Information
- General Information

The Plastic Surgery Team

Consultant Plastic Surgeons

Mr R Bains	Mr I Smith	Miss L Touill
Mr C Munson	Mr C Fenn	Mr A Hussain
Mr W Bhat	Mr J Smith	Mr C West
Mr I Natalwala	Miss J Goodenough	Mr M Liddington
Miss Bourke	Mr D Thornton	Mr D Leonard
Mr A Elbatawy	Miss C Hernon	

Contacts

Plastics Dressing Clinic

A floor Clarendon Wing, LGI

Telephone: **0113 392 3572**

Email: **leedsth-tr.handsandplastics@nhs.net**

Getting in touch

Plastic Dressing clinic is open Monday to Friday 8m to 5pm.

We do not work weekends or Bank Holidays.

Please ring Ward L22 out of hours, contact 111, or attend a walk in centre.

If you require urgent medical attention please attend LGI Accident and Emergency Department.

In a non-emergency please contact your GP.

Split Skin Graft (SSG)

A thin layer of skin is taken from a different part of your body most commonly your thigh and placed to cover the area of surgery.

This donor area is usually the most painful area, the dressing remains undisturbed for 2 weeks even though it may become blood soaked and hard, it will then be removed by the dressings nurses. Bleeding should settle after a couple of days and an extra pad can be applied over the dressing. If bleeding continues longer, then please get in touch as advised.

The dressing on the operation site usually remains for 5 to 7 days and may be attached with stitches or clips.

Full thickness graft

Full thickness grafts contain both the dermis and epidermis and can be taken from most parts of the body, these donor sites are usually stitched together and have a small dressing over them. These dressings are removed when you return to dressing clinic.

Wider excision and Local Flap

As with Full thickness grafts these wounds are stitched together and may have paper stitches over the wound. If the dressing requires changing this can be done but the paper sutures should remain undisturbed until your dressing appointment.

General Information

What to expect after surgery

You may feel slightly lethargic for a couple of days after your surgery, continue with normal life but do not do any extreme or strenuous activities.

Pain

No surgery is without pain, please ensure that you have over the counter pain relief such as paracetamol available for your discharge home.

You will experience swelling post-operatively as part of the normal healing process, however this can be quite uncomfortable. Elevation is recommended to reduce swelling.

Dressings

Most wounds will be covered with a dressing, please do not disturb your dressing unless instructed to remove them by the surgeon, all dressings should also be kept dry.

Some dressings will be stitched or stapled in place this gives pressure to the wound and holds the dressing in place until your first visit to dressing clinic.

Some wounds on the face are left uncovered and you may be given ointment to apply when at home.

Complications

Bleeding

A small amount of bleeding into the dressing is normal, if bleeding continues apply pressure with a clean hankie (not tissue) for 10 minutes.

Elevate the wound where possible.

If the wound is on your head we advise that you sleep with your head elevated on pillows.

Infection

If the area around your wound becomes red and hot to touch please contact us as soon as possible for advice and review as if there is an infection you may need antibiotics.

What can I do to reduce complications?

You can improve your surgical outcome by following advice given by medical and nursing staff.

Smoking tobacco, e-cigarettes or any other substances can have a major impact on your recovery.

Smoking also impacts on wound healing and can increase the risk of infections. Therefore, it is advised to not smoke throughout your treatment. Many patients use this treatment as an opportunity to stop smoking and if you require further support, please contact your GP.

Eat a healthy diet to aid wound healing.

Attend your clinic appointments for wound review if given.

What to expect after you are discharged home?

Prior to your discharge home from the ward you will be...

1. Given information on self care of your wound.
2. Asked to arrange a visit to your GP nurse for dressing care.
3. Given follow-up appointment at Plastic Dressing Clinic, where the nurses will assess and re-dress your wounds, care for /remove drains, or give further advice where necessary.

You may be made additional appointments to attend the dressing clinic, the nurses will discuss this with you at each visit.

Further Information

Can I shower?

It is advised to keep your dressings clean and dry. You can put a plastic bag over your dressings to keep them dry while showering, or alternatively you can bath with your leg/arm over the side. You will be advised when you can shower your wound during your discharge from hospital or at your clinic appointments.

Can I have a sick note for my employer?

If you require a sick note, please ask for this while you're in hospital. Please contact your GP for any sick notes required after your discharge from hospital.

Ongoing care

Once your wound is healed please moisturise and massage the area twice daily with a simple moisturiser and firm circular motions over the whole scar.

Please also ensure that you use a high factor sun cream at all times and wear a hat especially if you have had surgery on your head.

Results

The surgeon will inform you of your results at a face to face clinic appointment or by a phone call, this may take between 6 to 8 weeks.



What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/nhsleedsfft

Your views matter

