



POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS – Skin Grafts

Skin grafts are thinner and therefore more fragile than normal skin. They are especially fragile for two weeks after the surgery.

Grafts develop sensation (feeling) over a period of months, but the sensation is never fully normal. Grafts usually are dry, scaly, and itchy.

Grafts initially are red, and gradually fade, but the color and texture rarely match surrounding skin exactly.

Most grafts contract while they are healing. Healing is complete when the graft colors have faded, usually several months.

Characteristics of the Donor Site (From which the Graft was taken):

Initial healing takes 1-3 weeks, but complete healing takes several months, until the area has faded.

When the outer dressing is removed the bottom (yellow) layer is left to dry, at which time the discomfort goes away. This usually takes 1-2 days. As healing progresses the yellow gauze becomes detached about the periphery. The gauze is usually completely detached by 3 weeks.

The donor site will then be pink and fades over several months. If your graft is full thickness you may only have a sutured in compression dressing.

Graft Care:

Avoid trauma, scratching, and burning of the grafted areas. Lubricate grafts daily with Vaseline, or non- medicated skin lotion. This may need to be continued indefinitely.

Keep the graft protected by a light dressing for 2 weeks after surgery. Refrain from washing or touching the graft during this time.

Protect the graft from sunlight until it has faded will help prevent a permanent discoloration.

Donor Site Care:

After the yellow gauze has dried, lightly lubricate it daily with Vaseline. Trim the lifted edges of the yellow gauze occasionally and allow the yellow gauze to detach itself. Do not pull it off.

Until the donor site has faded, avoid scratching, trauma, burns, and sunlight.

The above instructions have been explained to me, and I understand the contents of this post-operative instruction sheet.

Patient Signature:

Date:

