



Split Thickness Skin Graft Aftercare

Delayed healing may occur if there is excessive bleeding, infection, sheer injury, smoking or tobacco use, diabetes, immunosuppression, or poor blood flow

- Immediately after surgery, the multilayer compression dressing or wound vac is to be left clean, dry, and intact until seen by your surgical team. The donor site, usually on the thigh, may have some drainage and may be tender to touch. It is important you **DO NOT REMOVE** any of the dressings. It is okay to re-inforce the donor site with tegaderms, ABD pads, and an acewrap. It is common for the acewrap on your thigh to fall down as you become more active. If this happens please adjust it as needed.
- 1 week after surgery the skin graft is still fresh and is in the process of revascularization. The skin graft must be handled with great care. The skin graft will have a grated appearance. Any staples or sutures used to secure the skin graft are left in place. The surgical team may decide to start xeroform dressing changes at this time.
- 2 weeks after surgery, the skin graft becomes much more adhered to the wound bed. You may develop red granular buds between the grated holes of the skin graft. This is nothing to worry about as we can apply silver nitrate to it at your follow-up appointment. At this time your donor site should not be tender and the dressing will be removed. The donor site should be left open to air with no special dressing required however be careful of any friction or rubbing. We recommend wearing loose fitted clothing. You will also be allowed to get the donor site wet with soap and water. If the donor site becomes dry you may apply a thin layer of aquaphor.
- 3-4 weeks after surgery the skin graft should be well integrated into the wound. It will start to look like “normal” skin at this time. During this time period staples and sutures may be removed. Within this time frame your surgical team will typically clear you to shower and get your skin graft wet. At this time you will be able to treat the graft like normal skin and you will no longer need to continue dressing changes. You will be able to leave graft open to the air and we recommend the use of aquaphor to help keep the graft moist.