

Caring for your skin graft

i Information for patients
Plastic Surgery



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How should I care for an exposed skin graft?

Bathe with cooled boiled water three times a day; gently dab the area rather than wiping it.

After bathing, leave to air dry for 20-30 minutes and then apply a thin layer of Chloramphenicol ointment or Soft Paraffin ointment as directed.

If there are any signs of an allergic reaction to the treatment, stop using it and contact the Dressings Clinic.

Keep the graft out of the sun and avoid swimming until the graft is fully healed.

If the donor site (where the skin was taken from) is healed, apply moisturiser twice a day.

How should I care for a healed skin graft?

Wash with un-fragranced soap daily.

When the dressings are first removed you will need to moisturise 2 - 3 times a day with a non-medicated skin lotion such as Aveeno, Diprobase or E45 Cream. The frequency can be reduced to once a day when the scar looks less dry and is not as itchy. Apply pressure when moisturising to help even out the scarring.

Protect the skin graft and donor site from the sun for 2 years following surgery. Wear clothing over them or use a sunscreen lotion with an SPF of 25 or higher.

Avoid tight hats / clothing that may cause friction and damage to the skin graft.

The graft often looks red or purple when the dressings are first removed. This can sometimes cause concern but it is completely normal. The

colour will fade gradually. A skin graft takes 12 - 24 months to reach its final cosmetic result. The colour of the skin graft will never be exactly the same as the surrounding skin; it is usually lighter, though sometimes can be darker.

The skin graft will also not feel as smooth as the surrounding skin and will benefit from applying a moisturiser regularly.

Contact number

Plastic Dressings Clinic:

- **0114 226 5147** (Monday - Friday 8.00am - 4.00pm)



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