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## Wound Care

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Regular wound care after a dermatology procedure (skin cancer surgery, biopsy, etc.) is very important for several reasons:

- ◆ Lower chance of infections
- ◆ Less discomfort
- ◆ Better long-term scar appearance
- ◆ Decreased time for complete healing

### **Wound Care Guidelines**

The following should be performed once to twice a day:

- ❖ Clean the wound gently with soap and water. Hydrogen peroxide can also be used but is not necessary in most cases.
- ❖ Apply an antibiotic ointment liberally to the wound. These can include:
  - Double antibiotic ointment (many generic types available)
  - Polysporin
  - Bacitracin
  - (Neosporin can be used, but many people are allergic to it, so be careful with it)
- ❖ Apply a fresh bandage
  - Band-Aids (or similar products) for small wounds
  - Non-stick pads or gauze and paper tape for larger wounds

In general, wounds will heal better if kept covered and moist in a clean environment. I don't recommend letting wounds dry out and scab over, as this tends to slow the healing process. Also, many people are allergic to the adhesive in bandages. If you are allergic to a particular type of bandage, try switching brands or using a different type of adhesive (paper tape, for example).

### **What To Watch Out For**

Danger signs of infection include:

- ◆ Redness
- ◆ Swelling
- ◆ Pus
- ◆ Pain (usually out of proportion to the size/depth of the wound)

If you think you may have an infection, contact the dermatology clinic immediately.