



### **Skin Graft Wound Care and Information**

Your surgical site was repaired using a skin graft. The skin graft is very fragile because it does not have a blood supply of its own and must establish a connection with the underlying wound bed. **It is critical that the graft remain undisturbed and moist for the postoperative period.**

Please perform the following in order to care for your skin graft:

- An outer tape dressing was placed over the surgical site in clinic. Ideally this should remain in place until you return to clinic in 1 week.
  - If the outer dressing falls off, you may use a Q-tip to **gently** apply Vaseline around the edges of the bolster dressing (below) and reapply a thin bandage.
- A bolster dressing (yellow Vaseline gauze) was either sutured over the graft or was secured by adhesive strips. This dressing should be left in place until you return to clinic in 1 week.
  - If the bolster dressing falls off prior to returning to clinic, you should use a Q-tip to **gently** apply a liberal amount of Vaseline to cover the entire graft and reapply a bandage.
- Vaseline should be added and the bandage replaced once daily.
- After your follow up visit for removal of the bolster dressing, you will continue to apply a liberal amount of Vaseline and keep the site covered with a bandage for the next two weeks.

How to take care of your donor site (where the graft came from).

- Apply Vaseline and bandage over donor site once daily.
- If the donor site is bandaged with the skin graft site, leave it on and no wound care is required.
- If your donor site is in an area where a bandage will not stay, apply liberal amount of Vaseline to keep the site moist. DO NOT let any surgical site “dry up” or “air out”.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**\*What do I take for pain?** Take Tylenol for pain. NOT Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, or other NSAIDs.

**\*Does this big bolster bandage require any special care?** No. Simply add copious amounts of Vaseline at least once daily so the site does not dry out. Keep in mind that skin grafts are especially delicate and try not to mess with the area. Sleep with head elevated more than usual to minimize swelling if the graft is on your face and try to sleep on your back.

**\*My surgical site is bleeding and won't stop, what do I do?** Hold pressure on the wound's bandage for 20 minutes without checking to see if it has stopped. If after 20 minutes, it continues to ooze, call the office and hold for another 20 minutes.

**\*When do I call the office?** Please call us at **(804) 326-4448** or email us at **support@absolutedermva.com** if you have any questions or concerns that your wound is not healing normally or you develop fever, foul smelling drainage, marked redness, swelling, or intense pain as these symptoms indicate an infection.