

TIP SHEET FOR PATIENTS HAVING SKIN SURGERY

Before Surgery

- ❑ Stop smoking for at least two weeks prior to surgery.
- ❑ Maintain good nutrition.
- ❑ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ❑ Limit alcohol intake for at least three days before surgery.
- ❑ Don't take Advil, Motrin, aspirin, or other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for 10 days to two weeks before surgery.
- ❑ Discuss any herbal supplements or vitamins that you are taking with your doctor to make sure it is safe to continue taking them before surgery and during recovery.
- ❑ Refrain from taking certain herbal supplements that can predispose to bleeding and interfere with healing. Some of these are ginkgo biloba, vitamin E, St. John's wort, and garlic.
- ❑ Avoid tanning before surgery.
- ❑ Remain on your drug regimens for hypertension and diabetes.
- ❑ Let your surgeon know well in advance of surgery if you use any topical agents on your skin.
- ❑ Tell your doctor if you get "cold sores" or have had herpes zoster (shingles)

After Surgery

- ❑ Get good bed rest.
- ❑ Keep your head elevated as much as possible to limit swelling; sleep on multiple pillows at night.
- ❑ Stop smoking for two to four weeks after surgery.
- ❑ Keep up the good nutrition.
- ❑ Maintain adequate hydration.
- ❑ Limit alcohol intake.
- ❑ Stay out of the sun.
- ❑ Wear sunscreen for at least six months after surgery.
- ❑ Use meticulous hygiene around the scar.
- ❑ Use topical double antibiotic ointment on the incision for at least three days after surgery.
- ❑ Do not get the scar wet for the first 48 hours; after that, clean gently and pat dry.