

GUIDELINES FOR MOLE REMOVAL

Immediately following the mole removal, you will likely have a bandage, or dressing, over the site. Keep the bandage dry and intact for the first 48-72 hours. Thereafter, you can remove the bandage.

Once the bandage has been removed you need to clean the surgical site 2-3 times per day. The end point of proper cleaning is avoidance of any scabbing and/or crusting where the mole was removed.

In the case of a mole that was shaved, you should start by using a dilute hydrogen peroxide mixture to clean the site. This will help minimize any scabbing or crusting over the site where the mole was shaved. **It is very important that no scabbing and/or crusting occur.** Scabbing and crusting will impede optimal wound healing and can lead to worsening scar formation. Normally you can dilute the over-the-counter hydrogen peroxide 1:1 with clean water. Using a Q-tip soaked in this dilute hydrogen peroxide mixture, clean the site of mole shaving. It is normal to see mild fizzling of the site during this step. After you have cleaned the site, you need to apply a layer of topical antimicrobial ointment. We usually recommend over-the-counter (non-prescription) Bacitracin ointment, which can be purchased at your local pharmacy. Other over-the-counter ointments may be used instead, however, there is typically a higher incidence of allergic reactions occurring with these other ointments.

In the case of a mole that was cut out (where the skin was stitched), you should start by cleaning the incision and stitches with over-the-counter hydrogen peroxide. This will help minimize any scabbing or crusting along the incision(s). **It is very important that no scabbing and/or crusting occur along the incision line.** Scabbing and crusting of the incision will impede optimal wound healing and can lead to worsening scar formation. After cleaning the incision(s) with hydrogen peroxide, you need to apply a layer of topical antimicrobial ointment. We usually recommend over-the-counter (non-prescription) Bacitracin ointment, which can be purchased at your local pharmacy. Other over-the-counter ointments may be used instead, however, there is typically a higher incidence of allergic reactions occurring with these other ointments.

You can usually get the site(s) wet in the shower 3-4 days after the procedure. *But this timing should be confirmed with Dr. Hilinski prior to getting the site(s) wet.* Sleep with the head elevated above your heart level for the first full week of recovery. Use a travel pillow to help minimize chances of rolling over on your face or neck while sleeping.

It is normal for the surgical site to appear slightly swollen and even bruised for upwards of 10 days following surgery. Mild bleeding and/or oozing are fairly normal within the first 72 hours of recovery. Anything more than this should be reported to Dr. Hilinski.

Our office will typically provide you with a prescription for postoperative medication (a narcotic pain reliever and an antibiotic). The narcotic medication is used *after surgery* for pain relief. The antibiotic is started *after surgery* once you get home. If a prescription was not provided to you in advance of your scheduled procedure date, please contact the office to have one called in to your local pharmacy. These medications should be picked up **before** your scheduled date so that you have them available once you get home after the procedure.

Arnica is a homeopathic medication that helps reduce swelling in many cases and should be started 1-2 days prior to your scheduled procedure date. Arnica should be taken after the mole removal as well for upwards of 7-10 days.

A topical silicone gel is highly recommended starting 7-10 days after the mole removal. This should be continued for 3-4 months following the procedure. Our office carries a recommended topical silicone gel that works quite well for this purpose. Contact our staff to purchase this during one of your office visits.

Confirm a follow-up appointment with our office.

Of note, it is very important that you maintain strict sun precautions regarding the site of the mole removal. Ideally, you should keep the site of mole removal completely covered from any sun exposure for upwards of one year out. Failure to do so can result in abnormal wound healing. Many patients mistakenly use a topical sun lotion that has a high SPF, thinking this is sufficient sun blockage. Unfortunately, this is not the case. You should try and use topical zinc instead, which provides much more complete protection from the sun while the site is healing.

You should avoid any vigorous activity, including exercise, until cleared by Dr. Hilinski.

Call our office immediately if you have any additional questions or concerns.

In case of an emergency, call 911 for immediate assistance.

I ACKNOWLEDGE UNDERSTANDING OF THE ABOVE _____ (PATIENT SIGNATURE)