

Signs of Infection

- Fever over 100.4°F or 38°C
- Excessive increased pain
- Excessive increased drainage which may be cloudy and have an odor.
- Redness which spreads away from the graft/donor sites.

Contacting Your Doctor

During office hours:

8am-5pm, Monday through Friday

Call (603) 650-5148

On weekends, holidays or after office hours:

Call (603) 650-5000 and ask the operator to page the plastic surgeon on call.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**For a listing of providers, events,
support groups and health information visit
Dartmouth-Hitchcock.org**

Manage your health online at myD-H.org

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center is a charitable organization
and has a financial assistance policy.

DHMC is a Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free campus.



Plastic Surgery
One Medical Center Drive Lebanon, NH 03756
(603) 650-5148 | Dartmouth-Hitchcock.org
201303-94

Skin Graft and Donor Site Care

Patient name: _____



Your skin protects your body from outside invaders and prevents the loss of fluids. When your skin is broken, there are several ways to repair it. One way is by placing a skin graft.

A skin graft is skin that is moved from one body area (donor site) to another body area (graft site), where it slowly receives a new blood supply over the course of the first five days after surgery

After Surgery

Care after surgery involves preventing infection and keeping the graft site motionless so that blood vessels can reconnect. For this reason, grafts are not disturbed for 5 to 7 days following surgery.

It is normal for your graft/donor sites to drain, peel and itch after surgery. You may also experience sharp “electric shock” type pain as your nerve endings heal. This gets better with time.

Your graft and donor sites will continue to change in strength and appearance for up to one year. Neither site will be as strong as your normal skin, may be darker or lighter in color and may never have normal feeling or reaction to hot and cold.

Graft Site Care

A pressure dressing will be applied to your graft site at the time of surgery. This dressing must stay in place and be kept dry for 5 to 7 days. At your first visit, we will remove the dressing, gently clean the site and put on a new dressing. We will teach you how to do this. Once your graft has taken and is healed, it can be left open without a bandage, but you will need to apply a moisturizing lotion to replace the natural lubricants lost in the grafting process for at least three months to a year.

Graft Site Instructions:

Donor Site Care

A foam dressing will most likely be applied to your donor site at the time of surgery. This dressing will remain in place until your first office visit, usually in 1 to 2 weeks. Often, the initial dressing will leak. If this happens, you should leave the foam dressing in place and add gauze sponges over the foam, changing the gauze as needed. At your first visit, we will remove your dressing, clean the donor site and apply an ointment or another foam dressing. We will teach you how to gently clean and dress the donor site.

Donor Site Instructions:
