

# Self-Care After Nipple/Areola Reconstruction Using Skin Graft

---

## Care of the Reconstructed Nipple/Areola Using Skin Graft

- Do not wet, disturb, or change the chest dressing. This will interfere with the healing of the skin graft.
- Your first post-operative visit is \_\_\_\_\_ days after surgery. During this visit your doctor or nurse will change your dressing. You will be told if you need to return for a second post-operative visit.
- You will be told when to take your first full shower after the skin graft has been evaluated.
- Avoid friction/pressure on the reconstructed nipple(s). This means you should not use a shoulder strap on the affected side. Pad your seat belt strap in a car if it falls across your reconstructed nipple/areola.

## Care of the Suture Line in the Donor Site

- Typical donor sites include groin and/or lower abdomen.
- The suture line in the donor area must be kept dry for 48 hours. Then you may shower from the waist down only. Do not soak the donor site incision line in the bath tub for six weeks.
- The suture line in the donor area may be tender and may feel tight during the first 48 hours after surgery. If you have pain or discomfort after surgery, you may take \_\_\_\_\_, as prescribed by your doctor.
- Avoid tension/friction on the donor site for six weeks.

## General Instructions

- You may resume your normal activities such as walking. Do not do vigorous exercise such as jogging or jumping until your doctor tells you it is safe.

## Call Your Doctor If You Develop:

- Redness, warmth, increased pain, or all of these, over the nipple/areola area.
- Any drainage, oozing, or separation of the underlying dressing.
- Temperature above 101° F or 38.3° C.
- Shaking chills.
- Shortness of breath or any difficulty breathing.
- Symptoms of a cold or the flu.
- Any type of skin infection anywhere on your body.

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nurse: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

After 5 P.M. and on weekends, call 212-639-7900 and ask for the Plastic Surgery resident on call.

