

Plastic Surgery Unit

Donor sites for split skin grafts

This leaflet gives information on caring for donor sites dressed with adhesive retention tape.

A donor site is an area where a thin layer of skin is taken. This skin is then placed onto a raw area (a surgical or non-surgical wound or defect) elsewhere on your body to help it heal.

Common donor sites are the thigh and upper arm, but they may also include the back, buttocks or abdomen.

The dressing covering your donor site is adhesive retention tape (Mefix/Hypafix). This tape is placed directly onto the raw skin.

Caring for your donor site

- You may have a bandage over your donor site. This can be removed 3 days after the operation. Any oozing from the donor site should stop around this time.
- The tape covering the donor site must not be removed under any circumstances.
- If the tape dressing oozes a little, especially during the night, you can apply a bandage or dressing over the top.
- The donor site dressing should be left in place for at least 10 - 14 days and will be removed at your clinic appointment.
- The donor site may feel painful and tight for the first few days after surgery. You are advised to take pain relief regularly if needed.



Patient Information

- The adhesive in the dressing is oil-soluble, which helps with removal.

Preparing for dressing removal

The night before your clinic appointment (about 2 weeks after surgery):

- Cover the dressing fully with cooking oil
- Place cling film over the area

This helps the dressing lift off easily at clinic.

You can also apply alcohol hand gel to the edges of the tape and gently massage. After a few minutes, the dressing should lift off easily.

If the dressing is removed

If the area has healed:

- No further dressings are needed
- Wash the area with non-scented soap
- Apply a non-scented moisturising cream such as E45 or Nivea twice daily.

Before each new application, wash off the old cream with non-scented soap. This helps prevent cysts or blackheads from forming.

Aftercare of the donor site

Donor sites usually heal with minimal scarring and no loss of sensation. To keep the donor site scar soft and supple, continue to apply a non-scented moisturiser twice daily.

Protect the donor site from extreme temperatures. Use a total sun block (SPF 25 or higher) if the newly healed donor site is likely to be exposed to direct sunlight during the next 3 to 6 months.

More information

If you have any questions about your treatment, please contact:

Plastic Dressing Clinic: Tel 024 7696 6474

Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, contact 024 7696 5225 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

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