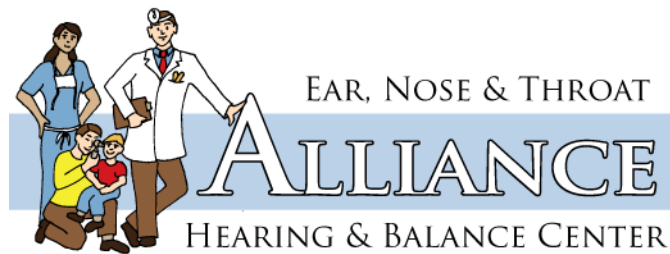




## Home Care after Minor Facial Surgery

1. **Expect a small amount of bleeding** from the incision several hours after the surgery. This can be limited by applying pressure over the incision with your finger for 20 minutes.
2. **Ice can be applied** for the first 24 hours after surgery to reduce the pain and swelling, although it is often not necessary. The ice should not be applied more than 20 minutes of any given hour to avoid freezing the skin. The ice should be in a plastic bag and separated from the skin with a wash cloth. Incisions made around the eye, forehead or nose may cause a “black-eye”.
3. If there is dried blood around the incision, clean the wound at least once daily with **hydrogen peroxide** and a Q-tip. If the wound is clean, do not continue to use hydrogen peroxide. The wound can also be cleaned gently with soap and water.
4. **Apply antibiotic ointment twice daily.** A thin layer of antibiotic ointment should cover the incision and sutures. Your doctor will usually tell you if this is not needed. **You can purchase antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin, Neosporin or triple antibiotic ointment) in any pharmacy** for \$3-4 without a prescription. Remind your doctor if you have an allergy to antibiotic ointment. An allergic reaction appears as painless, sometimes itchy, redness all around the wound.
5. **After one week, if the wound is progressing well, the antibiotic ointment can be discontinued** since prolonged use may lead to an allergic reaction. Vaseline or other moisturizers which can continue to protect the healing wound are recommended for another two weeks. Vitamin E is okay, but may develop an allergic reaction. Do not use Hydrocortisone cream on the wound unless you discuss this with your doctor.
6. If you have a Band-Aid on the wound, this can be removed within 24 hours or when it becomes soiled. **Most wounds can be left open to the air.** You may choose to hide the wound with a Band-Aid or sterile gauze and tape.
7. **Do not allow the wound to stay in contact with water too long** because this will cause swelling and disrupt the healing. Therefore, keep the wound as dry as possible during showering. When the wound gets wet, dab it dry carefully and then apply antibiotic ointment or vaseline.
8. **Call your doctor's office if**
  - The wound continues to bleed
  - The incision becomes red, swollen or drains pus
  - You develop a rash
  - You have any other questions or problems



9. You should have **a return appointment in 5 to 10 days** to have your sutures removed. If you had tissue sent to the pathologist, the report may be available at the time of this visit. With skin cancer, the most important information is whether or not it has been completely removed.

If the margins of the excision are clear of cancer, no further surgery is needed. If there was some microscopic evidence that the cancer was at the edges of the excision, your doctor will make a new plan which may require a second small excision to be safe.

No matter what the pathology report was, **if you observe any area along the incision which continues to scab or to bleed**, sometime more than 2 weeks after the surgery, let your doctor know. Often this is no more than inflammation of a stitch under the skin, but it should be examined.

10. **Protect the wound from the sun.** After one week the wound can be camouflaged by a cosmetic cover, such as Clinique cover with sunscreen. The use of sunscreen should start after one week as long as there is no open wound or scab.
11. **If you have any objection to the appearance of your wound**, please discuss this with your doctor. Other problems, such as numbness around the incision and some lumpiness under the skin, may be unavoidable results of the surgery, but, if they concern you, please bring them to our attention.

**Keep in mind that the total process of healing a wound is slow.** You will see incisions and transplanted tissues that initially are swollen, hard, tight and red will often improve during the 6 to 12 months after surgery.