

## Donor Site Care (Xeroform)

### What to Expect

When you return from surgery you will have a bulky dressing over the area from where skin was taken. This area is the donor site. You may have some drainage from the site. It may be blood tinged. The dressing will be removed the next day. There will be yellow gauze over the site called xeroform (zeroform). The gauze will remain in place until the donor site is dry. Then, you will start to remove this gauze.

### Site Care

The site is “dried” using a blow-dryer on a low, cool setting. Blow dry for 15 to 30 minutes at least 4-5 times a day. Keep doing this until the gauze over the site is dry. When it is **completely** dry, you can gently peel it off to show the skin below it. Any “new skin” that you expose, cover with Nivea® or Elte Lite® lotion at least three times a day.

### Key Points

It may take a few days for the donor site to dry. It may take longer if the site is very large. The more you use the blow-dryer, the faster it will dry.

Be sure the donor site is **completely** dry before peeling off the gauze. The gauze will feel hard to the touch at this point and may have scabbing on top of it.

The gauze over the site will dry from the edges toward the middle. As the edges dry, the gauze will curl up. These curled edges can be cut back with scissors. It can take a few days to remove the entire gauze from the site.

If the gauze is peeled off too soon, the skin under it will stay raw and moist and may bleed. If this happens, stop peeling and continue to blow-dry.

Healed donor sites are a deeper pink/red color. They look like a sunburn. The color will fade over time.

**Do not** soak in a tub or shower with the gauze on unless your doctor tells you to. Once the gauze is dry, it is best to peel it off. If you get it wet, it may cause the skin below to get moist. You will need to blow-dry the site again.

There will be some pain when you peel the gauze away. Once it is removed and the Nivea® or Elte Lite® lotion is applied, the area will feel better and less “tight”.

### When to Call

- Any increased redness (about 1 inch in width) or swelling around the site.
- Foul smelling drainage or pus.
- Fever greater than 100.5° F.
- Pain not controlled with medicine.

### Who to Call

**Plastic Surgery Clinic:** Monday-Friday from 8:00-4:30 pm, at **(608) 263-7502**.

After 4:30 pm, weekends or holidays, the clinic number is answered by the paging operator. Ask for the plastic surgeon on call. Leave your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

If you live out of the area, call the toll-free number **1-800-323-8942**.

