Donor Site Care

For All Donor Sites
Monitor for signs and symptoms of infection:

- Increased redness (over 1 inch in width) and swelling around the skin graft.
- Foul smelling or blue-green colored drainage from the skin graft.
- Flu-like symptoms (fever, chills, nausea or vomiting, muscle aches).
- Increased pain.

Care of a Donor Site with a Mepilex® Ag Dressing
Mepilex® Ag is an absorbent foam dressing with a silicone layer with silver that adheres to intact skin and does not stick to open wounds.

Leave the donor site dressing in place until you return for wound care. Keep it clean and dry.

Call us if you have any of the following concerns as your dressing may need to be changed:

- Outer dressing becomes soaked with too much drainage from the donor site.
- Outer dressing gets wet.
- Dressing comes off, exposing the open donor site.
- Any signs and symptoms of infection occur (see above).

Care of a Donor Site After the Mepilex® Ag Dressing Is Removed

- Wash the area with mild soap and water.
- Treat open areas with Bacitracin and Cuticerin or as directed.
- Apply moisturing cream that is free of perfume or dyes (such as Lubriderm®, Eucerin®, Nivea®) to healed areas to keep donor site from drying out and cracking. Avoid creams with alcohol or numbing agents.
- Monitor for signs and symptoms of infection and call with any concerns.

Care of Primary Closure Donor Site

- Keep the site covered with the first dressing as directed by your provider.
- Once the dressing is removed, leave the incision site open to the air.
- If Steri-Strips™ are used (thin white tapes across your incision), **do not** remove them until they loosen and fall off on their own. This takes about one week.
- **No tub baths or soaking in water.** You may shower when directed by your provider.
- Monitor for signs and symptoms of infection and call with any concerns.

Care of a Healed Donor Site

- Wash the area with mild soap and water.
- Apply a moisturing cream that is free of perfume and dyes (such as Lubriderm®, Eucerin®, or Nivea®) to healed donor site. Avoid creams with alcohol or numbing agents.
- Apply compression as directed by your provider.

Who to Call
General Surgery and Burn Clinic
Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
(**608) 264-8040**

For urgent questions or needs after hours or on weekends, please call the Burn Unit at (**608) 263-1490** or call **(608) 262-2122** and ask to have the Burn resident paged.

For non-urgent questions or needs after hours or on weekends, please leave a message for the General Surgery triage nurse at (**608) 890-9542**.

Toll free number: **1-800-323-8942**.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2026 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5825