Massaging your scar is important in order to achieve the optimal result. It will also give you the best possible scar in the shortest time.

You will find that the wound scar will thicken over the first four to six weeks post-operatively. Massaging will help settle this. You may also benefit from a silicone ointment – these are available in Dr Rowe’s rooms. Discuss the timing of silicone ointment implementation and taping with Dr Rowe or his nurse.

The scar is often also red. This is normal. It simply reflects an increased blood supply to the scar during the maturation phase.

**Starting one or two weeks after surgery**, when any dressings or sutures have been removed, gentle massage to the scar and flap should be commenced. You should massage the scar for at least five minutes twice a day.

In the **first week** of massaging you should massage in a soft circular motion.

In the **second and subsequent weeks,** you should massage firmly, applying pressure to the scar and flap if present. Where possible, start applying pressure between two fingers in areas such as the rim of the nose, the ear, or the lip. You can also start to gently “strip” massage to help remove swelling and break the scar down.

The aim of firm pressure is to remove the oedema and swelling from the scar and flap. This will help improve the contour of the operated area.

It is normal to expect the wound to be tender. Massaging will help the tenderness and sensitivity to settle.

Stop massaging the scar when it has softened.

You should expect the flap and scar to be settled after about six to twelve weeks, but it will often still be slightly pink. This will continue to settle but can take up to six months to fully fade.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS OR**

**ARE WORRIED ABOUT WOUND**

**INFECTION, THEN PLEASE RING**

**DR ROWE’S ROOMS ON**

**(07) 3397 0444**

**OR AFTER HOURS THROUGH GREENSLOPES HOSPITAL 3394 7111.**

**OTHERWISE, YOU CAN CONSULT**

**YOUR LOCAL GP WHO CAN**

**CONTACT DR ROWE DIRECTLY**

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,

*PLEASE ASK*

**DR DANIEL ROWE**

**PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEON**

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 Postoperative

# Instruction Sheet

**Trunk, Lower and Upper Limb**

# Dr Daniel Rowe

# Plastic & Reconstructive Surgeon

*M.B.B.S. (Qld)*

# *F.R.A.C.S. (Plast. Surg.)*

**Phone: (07) 3397 0444**

**POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **Oozing** and even bleeding is normal after any surgery. **APPLY FIRM PRESSURE WITH A COOL PACK** (for 15 to 20 minutes at a time).

**KEEP THE AREA ELEVATED** (sit up rather

than lie down) or put your leg up on a pillow.

You should find that the bleeding will settle with 15-20 minutes of continuous pressure. (Use a clock to time this — 20 minutes *is a long time*!)

1. Some **pain** and **discomfort** is expected once the local anaesthetic wears off. Take **paracetamol** as soon as practical after your procedure, then as needed. Applying a COOL PACK and PRESSURE will help with the discomfort.
2. **Bruising and swelling**is *normal*. This will worsen over the first two days then begin to settle.
3. You must keep the wound clean and dry for 24-72 hours then usually you can wet it in the shower. Do not use soap or shampoo on the suture line – it will get very irritated. Dab it dry with a clean towel or face washer or blow it dry with a hair dryer set to cool.
4. Typically, the dressing will be a white adhesive fabric called hypafix or similar. There may be a bandage and pad over this, which will come off after 24-72 hours. The hypafix is left until it falls off and then can be reapplied as needed.
5. Avoid all strenuous activity for at least four weeks after surgery.

**READ THE LAST PAGE FOR CONTACT DETAILS**

Usually, there will be no surface sutures to be removed on your body but there will possibly be some on the limbs. You will need to phone for an appointment time in Dr Rowe’s rooms for these to be removed if necessary – write it below to help you remember.

After removal of sutures, you should continue with taping to the wound for at least two months if tolerable. Do not use other treatments unless discussed with Dr Rowe. Silicone scar treatments can usually be started two weeks after surgery.

**Do not scratch or itch the wound as this will damage it and lead to poor healing and worse scarring.**

The appearance of the wound will change significantly over time – do not expect a perfect result as soon as you go home. There will be a lot of change in the first few weeks.

Makeup and sunscreen can be used on the wounds once they are fully healed - at least two weeks after surgery, once massage has begun.

Your suture removal is at:

……………………………………………………… .

The day and time of your suture removal is:

……………………………………………………… .

**Instructions:** ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….......

**Thank you for reading and following these instructions carefully.**

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,

PLEASE ASK



**Signs of infection:**

1. Increased **redness** around the wound
2. Increased **swelling** in the surrounding area after 1-2 days
3. Leakage of **pus** or other fluid anytime 2 days after post procedure

 Any of these can be a sign of infection—either contact Dr Rowe or see your local GP