POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS – SKIN GRAFTING

Graft Characteristics
- Grafts are thinner and therefore more fragile than normal skin. They are especially fragile for two weeks after the surgery.
- Grafts develop sensation (feeling) over a period of months, but the sensation is never fully normal.
- Grafts usually are dry, scaly, and itchy.
- Grafts initially are red, and gradually fade, but the color and texture rarely match surrounding skin exactly.
- Most grafts contract while they are healing.
- Healing is complete when the grafts have faded, usually several months.

Characteristics of the Donor Site (From which the Graft was taken)
- Initial healing takes 1-3 weeks, but complete healing takes several months, until the area has faded.
- When the outer dressing is removed the bottom (yellow) layer is left to dry, at which time the discomfort goes away. This usually takes 1-2 days. As healing progresses the yellow gauze becomes detached about the periphery. The gauze is usually completely detached by 3 weeks.
- The donor site will then be pink and fades over several months.

Graft Care
- Avoid trauma, scratching, and burning of the grafted areas.
- Lubricate grafts daily with Vaseline, or non-medicated skin lotion. This may need to be continued indefinitely.
  Keep the graft protected by a light dressing for 2 weeks after surgery. Refrain from washing or touching the graft during this time.
- Protecting the graft from sunlight until it has faded will help prevent a permanent discoloration.

Donor Site Care
- After the outer dressing has been removed, apply a heat lamp (100 W bulb, not closer than 18”) to the donor site for 15 minutes 4 times a day until dry (usually 1-2 days). If it starts burning, turn the lamp off or move it further away.
  After the yellow gauze has dried, lightly lubricate it daily with Vaseline.
- Trim the lifted edges of the yellow gauze occasionally.
- Allow the yellow gauze to detach itself. Do not pull it off.
- Until the donor site has faded, avoid scratching, trauma, burns, and sunlight.

The above instructions have been explained to me, and I understand the contents of this post-operative instruction sheet.

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Patient Signature
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Date