



SKIN CARE

The remaining limb after an amputation is called a stump. The following instructions will help you take care of your stump correctly.

DO: While stitches remain in you stump, follow your doctor's instructions. After the stitches are removed, continue to follow any special instructions given to you by your doctor. If you are given the o.k. to bath your leg, wash your stump daily with mild soap [Dial antibacterial soap is good] and lukewarm water. Use a soapy wash cloth, squeeze it over the incision, dab it with the wash cloth [do not scrub]. Rinse well with clean water and pat dry rather than rub. Let stump air dry for 10 minutes before you cover with ace wrap or shrinker. Do this in the evening rather than in the morning if possible.

Check your skin every night, both on your stump and your other leg. Look for any areas that appear red, dark, blistered, or open. Make sure you look at the back of your legs and bottom of your foot, as well as between your toes. You can use a hand mirror to help you look at the areas that are hard to see. If you are unable to see well, ask a family member to help you. If you notice changes, tell your doctor immediately.

If you need to apply lotion to your stump because of dry skin, do this in the evening as well.

DON'T shave your stump as this may causes irritation or rash.

DON'T use lotions that have vaseline as this may clog the skin pores.

DON'T soak your stump as this may cause it to swell or the skin to soften.

SCAR MASSAGE

After the stitches are out and the scar is healed, you should massage your scar several times a day to keep the scar from binding down. Do this by placing one fingertip above the scar and the second finger tip below the scar. The fingertips stay in place as you try to gently move the skin forward and back then side to side. Repeat this three times then pick up fingers and move to the next adjoining spot. Work your way from one end of the scar to the other end. This helps the skin to be able to move freely without tearing if you are able to wear a prosthesis. This also helps your skin to be less sensitive to touch. You should also handle the rest of your stump every day so that it will not be sensitive to touch. Ask your therapist or doctor to show you how to do this correctly. You should continue this for several months and periodically check for any areas that do not move freely for the first full year following your amputation.

DON'T spread your fingers apart, causing the scar to open or stretch wide. If you notice this happening, check with your therapist or doctor before continuing.

If you have questions, please call UVA Prosthetics and Orthotics at 434-**243-4670**.