



CHINOOK

FOOT & ANKLE CLINIC

Post-Operative Dressing Change Instructions (Week 1)

Provided by Your Foot & Ankle Care Team

You are receiving this guide because you are unable to attend your 1-week post-operative visit. At this stage, **you are NOT removing stitches**—just changing the outer dressing to keep the surgical site clean, dry, and protected.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, **please call our office (403)331-3338**

Before You Start

Gather Supplies

- Clean gauze pads
- Gauze roll
- **Coban** wrap
- Scissors
- Clean towel
- A trash bag

Prepare the Area

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
 - Set up supplies on a clean surface.
 - Sit somewhere comfortable with good lighting.
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Step-By-Step: How to Change Your Dressing

1. Remove the Old Dressing

- Carefully unwind the outer wrap (Koban/Coban or tensor bandage).
- Gently lift off the layers of gauze.
- **It is normal and expected to see some dried blood on the old gauze.**
- If anything is stuck and difficult to remove, do **not** pull hard—stop and call the office for instructions.



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2. Inspect the Surgical Area

You may see:

- Mild redness around the incision
- Some swelling
- Slight bruising
- Dried blood near the stitches

These are usually **normal** at this stage.

Look carefully for anything that seems unusual (see “Signs of Infection” below).

3. Apply the New Dressing

- Place clean **gauze** directly over the incision.
- Wrap a **gauze roll** around the foot firmly enough to stay in place but **not tight**—you should still be able to wiggle your toes.
- Apply **Coban wrap** over the gauze layer. Use gentle tension (it sticks to itself).
- Secure the end of the wrap by pressing it onto itself or using tape.

4. After You Finish

- Check that your toes are pink and warm (not pale, cold, or numb).
- Keep the dressing **clean and dry** until your next appointment.

Signs of Infection or Problems

Call our office **right away** if you notice:

- Redness that is spreading or getting worse
- Increasing warmth or swelling
- Yellow, green, or foul-smelling drainage
- Fever or chills
- Severe or increasing pain
- Toes becoming numb, cold, or turning bluish/purple
- The dressing repeatedly becomes soaked with blood



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Activity & Care Reminders

- Keep weight off the surgical foot if you were instructed to remain **non-weight-bearing**.
 - Use your boot, post-op shoe, crutches, or walker as directed.
 - Keep the foot elevated when possible to reduce swelling.
 - Do **not** get the dressing wet — cover it during showers.
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When to Return to the Office

Your next scheduled visit will be your **2-week post-op appointment**, where your provider will examine the incision and remove stitches.

Please contact us if you need to reschedule or have questions.