

On your return to Dressing Clinic, please ask to see a therapist to assess your graft or scar to progress your movement or mobility or if you have any concerns.

If your scar is firm, purple, bumpy or is causing restrictions to your movement or walking, please contact the Plastics Therapy Team:

Tel: 0151 430 2231

Email: [plasticstherapy@sthk.nhs.uk](mailto:plasticstherapy@sthk.nhs.uk)

## Advice and exercises following a skin graft to your lower limb

### Patient information leaflet

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید، لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formacie, proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil, vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

Whiston Hospital  
Warrington Road,  
Prescot, Merseyside, L35 5DR  
Telephone: 0151 426 1600

St Helens Hospital  
Marshalls Cross Road,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 3DA  
Telephone: 01744 26633

### Grafts on top of your foot

- Unless you have been told otherwise, you can walk short distances following a graft to the top of your foot.
- You should limit walking to only a very short distance indoors to prevent swelling and prevent friction on the graft.
- Keep your affected leg elevated above hip height when at rest.
- Wear a 'post-operative shoe' provided by the ward to keep dressings dry and prevent slipping.
- It is important to keep your ankle and knee moving to maintain good blood flow in your leg and stop your joints from getting stiff. Complete exercises 3-4 times daily:



1. Sat in a chair or lying on a bed, slowly bend and straighten your ankle. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



2. Sat in a chair or lying on your back, slowly bend and straighten your knee. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



3. Lying on your back, straighten your knee then lift your leg about 6 inches off the bed and slowly lower down. Repeat 10 times with each leg.

It is very important to start scar management once the area has healed. There are a variety of products available. Your therapist will assess your scar and advise you on the appropriate methods to help your scar.

### General skin care

The healed area should be washed at least once a day. A mild, un-perfumed soap should be used. A build up of cream and dirt on the skin can lead to blackheads or spots and potentially skin breakdown.

### Massage and moisturising

Massage and the application of an unperfumed moisturiser such as E45 is an important part of ongoing care of the skin. Healed skin can become very dry and itchy, if the oil producing glands are damaged. However it is important that you only apply cream to the healed areas of skin, avoiding any broken areas. Massaging the scar can help to place pressure through the scar tissue. It must be done in a firm circular movement. This will help to soften the scar and aid absorption of moisturising creams.

### How often do I need to apply the cream?

The healed area should be massaged three times per day and after bathing / showering. Ensure you wash off the previous moisturiser before reapplying.

### Sunlight

Exposure to direct sunlight should be avoided whilst the skin is healing and the scar is developing (this can take up to 2 years), as the scar area will burn easily. If exposure to the sun is unavoidable, then total sun block should be applied regularly to the scar area.

## Grafts not over a joint

- Unless you have been told otherwise, you can walk short distances following a graft to your thigh, calf or shin.
- **If you are struggling with mobility post operatively, please request a review by the therapy team on the ward before your discharge.**
- You should limit your walking to only a very short distance indoors only to prevent swelling to your leg.
- Keep your affected leg elevated above hip height when at rest.
- It is important to keep your ankle and knee moving to maintain good blood flow in your leg and stop your joints from getting stiff:



1. Sat in a chair or lying on a bed, slowly bend and straighten your ankle. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



2. Sat in a chair or lying on your back, slowly bend and straighten your knee. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



3. Lying on your back, straighten your knee then lift your leg about 6 inches off the bed and slowly lower down. Repeat 10 times with each leg.

## Grafts to feet

### Grafts to the sole of your foot

- You may have been informed not to bear weight through the foot and should therefore be assessed by the therapist prior to discharge.
- If you have had a graft on/near the ball of your foot you should only bear weight through your heel.
- If you have had a graft on/near your heel you should only bear weight through the ball of your foot.
- You should limit walking to only a very short distances indoors to prevent swelling and prevent friction on the graft. Your therapist or doctor will tell you when it is ok to start walking on the graft.
- Wear a 'post-operative shoe' provided by the ward to keep dressings dry and prevent slipping.
- It is important to keep your ankle and knee moving to maintain good blood flow in your leg and stop your joints from getting stiff. Complete exercises 3-4 times daily:



1. Sat in a chair or lying on a bed, slowly bend and straighten your ankle. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



2. Sat in a chair or lying on your back, slowly bend and straighten your knee. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



3. Lying on your back, straighten your knee then lift your leg about 6 inches off the bed and slowly lower down. Repeat 10 times with each leg.

## Grafts to ankles

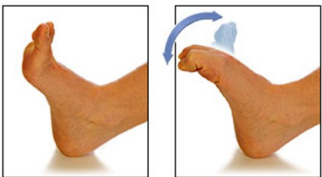
- Unless you have been told otherwise, walk short distances following a graft, flat foot weightbearing. Please request therapy assessment.
- You should limit walking to only a very short distance indoors to prevent swelling and prevent friction on the graft.
- You **should not move your ankle** to protect the graft.
- Your therapist or doctor will tell you when it is ok to start moving your ankle again.
- Keep your affected leg elevated above hip height when at rest.
- Wear a 'post-operative shoe' provided by the ward to keep dressings dry and prevent slipping.
- It is important to keep your toes and knee moving to maintain good blood flow in your leg and stop your joints from getting stiff. Complete exercises 3-4 times daily:



1. Sat in a chair or lying on your back, slowly bend and straighten your knee. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.



2. Lying on your back, straighten your knee then lift your leg about 6 inches off the bed and slowly lower down. Repeat 10 times with each leg.



3. Sat in a chair or lying on your back, bend and straighten your toes. Hold each position for 10 seconds. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.

## Grafts to knees

- Unless you have been told otherwise, you can walk short distances following a graft to your knee.
- You should keep your knee straight and limit your walking to only very short distances indoors to prevent swelling and prevent friction on the graft.
- You **should not move your knee** to protect the graft.
- Your therapist or doctor will tell you when it is ok to start moving your knee again.
- Keep your affected leg elevated above hip height when at rest.
- It is important to keep your ankle moving to maintain good blood flow in your leg and stop your joints from getting stiff. Complete exercises 3-4 times daily:



1. Lying on your back, straighten your knee then lift your leg about 6 inches off the bed and slowly lower down. Repeat 10 times with each leg.



2. Sat in a chair or lying on a bed, slowly bend and straighten your ankle. Repeat 10 times with your affected leg.