Patient Handout
Post-Op Wound Instructions for Nail Surgery

1. Wash hands before each dressing change.
2. Keep area absolutely DRY for 24–48 h. When you first change your dressing, there may be hard, dried blood in the gauze. Wet this dressing under a faucet or in the shower to soften this dressing so that taking it off is less painful.
3. After this time, the area may get wet, however, you should protect it from prolonged water exposure (avoid swimming and tub bathing).
4. Avoid any strenuous activity for _____ days/weeks after surgery (heavy lifting, exercise, etc.)
5. Use NO aspirin-containing products for the first 2 days after surgery. If you should experience any discomfort or pain, you may take Tylenol (acetaminophen) one to two tablets every 4–6 h (according to label instructions) or medication prescribed by your doctor.
6. It is not unusual to experience throbbing after surgery. Elevate the extremity and apply ice to decrease swelling. If the throbbing continues, then you may have to take off the bandage and put on a looser one.
7. If bleeding occurs, apply continuous firm pressure and elevate the extremity for 20 min. If it continues, call your doctor.
8. If the area should become very sore and red, as it may if it becomes infected, please call your doctor.
9. It is not unusual for there to be a bruise and dried blood around the wound site that will last for several days.
10. Remove the dressing twice a day. Cleanse the area with diluted (50% with water) hydrogen peroxide and dry gently. You may soak the dressing in water to soften it if it sticks to the wound.
11. If applicable, apply a thin layer of _______ then cover with a bandaid/telfa and tape as directed by the doctor’s office. Do this two times a day for 2 weeks or until healed.

PHONE NUMBER TO CALL