

Here is what's helpful to have at home before surgery, and a general preview of what recovery looks like. We won't know your exact repair until surgery is complete, so you'll get specific written instructions matching it on surgery day — this is just so nothing catches you by surprise.

Supplies to Have at Home

Wound care: Petroleum jelly (Vaseline) or Aquaphor • non-stick gauze pads ("Telfa") • paper tape • extra gauze squares • mild fragrance-free soap

Comfort & healing: ice pack or bag of frozen peas • extra pillows for elevation • a loose button-front or zip-front shirt • a hand mirror if the site is hard to see

Pain relief: extra-strength Tylenol • ibuprofen (unless another doctor has told you not to take it)

For later, once healed: silicone gel, sheets, or tape • broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen — not needed until your wound is fully closed, but fine to have ready

What Recovery Generally Looks Like

- Daily wound care — gentle cleaning and a fresh bandage with a moisture-friendly ointment, once a day, for one to a few weeks depending on your repair.
- Activity limits — no heavy lifting, straining, or hard exercise for about 1 to 2 weeks, and no swimming or soaking the wound until fully healed.
- Pain control — extra-strength Tylenol alternated with ibuprofen 400–600 mg works well for most patients, unless another doctor has told you not to take one of these.
- Bleeding — a little pink or red fluid on the bandage on day 1 is normal. For more, press firmly with clean gauze for 20 straight minutes by the clock — do not peek early.
- A follow-up visit to check that everything is healing as expected, even if it looks and feels fine.

Signs of Infection — Call Us Right Away

- Spreading redness, worsening pain, warmth, or swelling
- Yellow/green or foul-smelling drainage
- Fever over 100.4°F (38°C)

Call us right away at (512) 786-3498. After hours emergency: go to the nearest ER.

A preview of scarring: your scar will look its worst around 4 to 8 weeks — red, raised, and firm. This is normal, not a problem, and it will keep fading and softening for up to a year. We'll give you a full scar care guide during your recovery.