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Healing of Donor-site Buccal Mucosa Urethroplasty

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Buccal mucosal graft represents the gold standard graft material for urethroplasty because of its thick epithelium and a thin lamina propria for maximal graft uptake. There is an ongoing debate whether to close the buccal graft donor site. We show a unique look at buccal donor site healing through serial pictures over a 100-day period. In this patient, the anterior half of the buccal donor site was closed at the time of harvest, allowing real-time observation of wound healing from both the closed and open aspects of the wound. *UROLOGY* 86: e9–e10, 2015. © 2015 Elsevier Inc.

A 25-year-old man with a 2.8-cm bulbar urethral stricture underwent a dorsal-onlay urethroplasty using buccal mucosal graft from the left cheek. We closed the buccal site in our typical fashion by reapproximating the anterior half of the wound with interrupted 4-0 chromic sutures, leaving the posterior half of the wound to heal by secondary intention to allow for hematoma drainage.¹

At 3-month follow-up visit, the patient is voiding well with no evidence of stricture recurrence, and his buccal graft donor site is well-healed. Throughout his recovery, the patient took pictures of the graft donor site (Fig. 1). An accompanying video shows a compilation of all the pictures taken chronologically throughout the 100-day postoperative period.

There is controversy as to whether to close the buccal mucosal graft donor site. A prospective study² and 2 randomized controlled trials^{3,4} showed benefit for nonclosure in terms of less pain and earlier return to diet. However, another randomized controlled trial⁵ showed less immediate postoperative pain and faster return of diet in the primary closure group. These pictures and the

accompanying video provide a unique opportunity for up-close examination of the donor-site healing process.

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Figure 1. Healing of buccal donor site through serial pictures over a 100-day period (black arrow: closed side of the wounds; white arrow and triangle: open side of the wound).