

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS BREAST AUG/ABDOMINOPLASTY

Once your surgery is completed, your healing and good outcomes require following all the instructions you are given.

The following instructions are your obligation. Use this as a checklist of progress as you heal. Included are normal post-surgical experiences and key health considerations that may be a cause of concern.

TYPICAL POST-OPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

Typical symptoms of breast surgery and signs to watch for following surgery with breast implants include the following:

Tightness in the chest region and/or abdomen stiffness; Tingling, burning or intermittent shooting pain: These are normal experiences as the skin, muscles and tissue stretch and as sensory nerves heal. Pain medication will help you cope with any discomfort. If you have drains, you may experience additional localized discomfort. **Consistent sharp pain should be reported to our office immediately.**

Hypersensitivity of nipples or lack of sensitivity or skin firmness, hypersensitivity or lack of sensitivity in abdominal area: This is normal and will gradually resolve over time. You may also experience a small amount of fluid or milk seeping through the nipples. **If this becomes painful or excessive notify our office immediately.**

A feeling of heaviness: It is normal for your chest to feel heavy as you adjust to your implants. This will subside within 2-4 weeks following surgery.

Shiny skin or any itchy feeling: Swelling can cause the breasts skin to appear shiny. As the healing process advances, you may also find a mild to severe itchy feeling of the breasts. An antihistamine like Benadryl can help to alleviate severe, constant itchiness. **If the skin becomes red and hot to the touch, contact our office immediately.**

Asymmetry, both sides of the body heal differently: One side of your body may look or feel quite different from one another in the days following surgery. This is normal. Although no two breasts in nature or following surgery are perfectly symmetrical, breast massage and time will produce breasts that are similar in shape, position and size.

A sloshing sound or sensation: This is not the result of your saline implant filler, but rather of air that is trapped in the implant pocket and fluid that may naturally accumulate. This is perfectly normal and will resolve within 2-4 weeks.

CALL THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- **A high fever, (over 101°) severe nausea and vomiting, continued dizziness or incoherent behavior, such as hallucinations.**
- **Any pain that cannot be controlled by your pain medication.**
- **Bright red skin that is hot to the touch.**
- **Excessive bleeding or fluid seeping through the incisions.**
- **A severely misshapen breast or region anywhere on your abdomen or bruising that is localized to one breast, region of the chest or abdomen.**

DAY OF SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS:

You will only be released to the care of a responsible adult. All of these instructions must be clear to the adult who will monitor your health and support you, around the clock in the first 24 hours following surgery.

DO NOT STAND FULLY UPRIGHT: Standing upright would greatly effect your result and could cause serious injury

Rest, but not bed rest: While rest is important in the early stages of healing, equally important is that you are ambulatory, meaning that you are walking under your own strength. Spend 10 minutes every 2 hours engaged in light walking indoors as your recover.

Recline with your head and chest slightly elevated above your lower body. Sleeping in a recliner may be more comfortable for you and can reduce swelling.

DO NOT CHANGE YOUR INCISIONS OR DRESSINGS ON YOUR ABDOMEN. Your first dressing change will be done in the office 1-2 days after your surgery. Keep your dressings clean and dry.

A cotton swab with peroxide is appropriate for cleansing. **DO NOT REMOVE ANY STERI-STRIPS OVER YOUR STITCHES.** Replace any compression garments over the gauze. If you have a drain placed in your incisions, carefully follow the instructions for drain care and record the amount of fluid collected on the drain care log.

Wear your compression garment and post surgical bra around the clock. Only remove your garment to

clean the incision or empty your drains. Do not allow the garment to become bunched on your abdomen. It may be more comfortable to wear a t-shirt under your garment.

Good nutrition: Fluids are critical following surgery. Stick to non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free and green tea-free beverages including fruit juices and water, milk and yogurt drinks. You must consume at least 8 ounces of fluid every 2 hours. Stick with soft, bland, nutritious food for the first 24 hours.

Take all medication, exactly as prescribed: this includes oral pain medication and antibiotics.
You may use an ice pack on your chest or abdomen to reduce swelling and discomfort. Do not apply ice directly on your skin.

Keep the Ace wrap and dressings on for the first 2 days.

Begin your breast massage when instructed.

Do not smoke. Smoking can greatly impair your safety prior to surgery and your ability to heal following surgery.

Relax. Do not engage in stressful activities. DO NOT LIFT anything heavier than a gallon of milk.

TWO TO SEVEN DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY

During this time you will progress with each day that passes. Ease into your daily activities. You may resume driving once you have stopped taking prescription pain pills. You may return to work whenever you feel comfortable. Ask Dr. Castor if you are unsure about returning to work if your job is too strenuous.

- You may shower after 48 hours once seen by Dr. Castor and your dressings and AceWrap have been removed. Take a warm, not hot shower. Do not take a bath. Limit your shower to 10 minutes. Do not remove any steri-strips which are directly covering the incision. A cotton swab with peroxide is appropriate for cleansing incisions. Do not rub your incisions. You may apply a fragrance free moisturizer to breast and surrounding skin, however not on your incisions. After showering wear your surgical bra or sports bra 24 hours a day.
- Ease into an upright position. You may slowly begin to stand taller each day as the tummy region begins to heal.
- Take antibiotic medications as directed. Take pain medication only as needed. You may wish to switch from prescription pain medication to Tylenol or Advil.
- You will be instructed on breast massage at your first post operative visit. Wear your sports bra and compression garment around the clock.
- Your implants will look to high up on your chest at first. Breast massage is important to help the muscle relax, so the implant will drop. It takes about six weeks on average for implants to drop.
- Do not resume any exercise other than regular walking. Walking is essential every day to prevent the formation of blood clots.
- No Sun Exposure. If you plan to go outdoors for any reason wear protective clothing and apply sunscreen.
- Maintain a healthy diet. DO NOT SMOKE. Do not consume alcohol.

ONE TO FOUR WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY

As you resume your normal daily activities, you must continue proper care and healing.

- Continue your breast massage and wound care as directed. You may trim the steri-strips shorter with scissors if they are starting to lift off the skin.
- Refrain from weight-bearing exercise, twisting or heavy lifting. No tennis, golf, softball or other sports with similar swinging motions. Avoid aerobic exercise that may cause a lot of bounce. You may begin range of motion exercises but not with any weight, pressure or resistance of any kind.
- DO NOT SMOKE. While incisions may have sealed, smoking deprives your body of necessary oxygen that can result in poorly healed, wide, raised scars.
- Continue to wear a proper surgical or sports bra. The bra you first wore following surgery may feel somewhat loose. You may replace it, however no under wires for 6 weeks. You may sleep without a bra; however a camisole with built-in shelf support can be comfortable and provides added support as you continue to heal.
- You may sleep flat. However do not sleep on your stomach. If you are a side sleeper, a soft pillow under your mid-back and shoulders may offer more comfort and support than a single pillow under your head.
- Practice good sun protection. Do not expose your breasts or abdomen to direct sunlight. If you are outdoors, apply at least an SPF 30 to the chest and abdomen area at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure.

Your chest and abdomen region will be highly susceptible to sunburn or the formation of irregular, darkened pigmentation.

- **Follow-up with any breast implant manufacturer paperwork and warranty as necessary.**

SIX WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY

Healing will progress and your breasts will settle into a more final shape and position.

- **You may ease into your regular fitness routine.** However realize that your upper body may require some time to return to prior strength.
- **Continue your breast massage.**
- **You may resume wearing under wire bras if desired.**
- **Discomfort or tightness and tingling will resolve.** Any lingering nipple sensitivity or lack of sensation should begin to greatly improve.
- **No need to resume smoking.** You have now gone 8 weeks (2 weeks prior to surgery and 6 weeks following) without a cigarette. For your long-term health, there is no need to resume smoking.

YOUR FIRST YEAR

- **Continue your breast massage, if instructed and practice monthly breast self exam.**
- **Your scars will continue to refine.** If they become raised, red or thickened, or appear to widen, contact our office. Early intervention is important to achieving well-healed scars. Scars are generally refined to fine incision lines one year after surgery.
- **A one-year post surgery follow-up is recommended.** However you may call our office at any time with your concerns or for needed follow-up.
- **If your breasts develop an unusually hard feeling, or a highly rounded “squeezed” appearance, call us as soon as possible.** You may be developing capsular contracture. Early treatment is the best solution.

Remember, breast implants are not lifetime devices. If your implants should rupture, or you suspect an implant is leaking, call our office as soon as possible. There is no risk to your health from the saline within the implant; it will safely be absorbed and naturally expelled by your body. However, until you are able to have the implant replaced you should perform daily breast massage to keep the implant free and loose in the implant pocket.

Your body will change with age. The appearance of your breasts will change too. You may wish to have your implants replaced or to undergo revision surgery to help maintain your appearance throughout life. Contact our office with any of your questions or concerns, at any time.

I have read and understand all of the above instructions. I understand that following these instructions is solely my responsibility. I understand that it is also my responsibility to ask Dr. Castor and/or his staff any questions I have related to these instructions or about my procedure, health and healing.