

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS BREAST REDUCTION

Once your surgery is completed, you must follow all the instructions given to you in order to heal properly and have a good outcome.

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 after breast surgery include the following:

Tightness and stiffness in treated areas: Bruising, swelling and redness: Tingling, burning or intermittent shooting pain. These are normal experiences as the skin, tissues and 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.**

Skin firmness, hypersensitivity or lack of sensitivity: This is normal and will gradually resolve over time.

Hypersensitivity of nipples or lack of sensitivity: 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.**

Shiny skin or any itchy feeling: Swelling can cause the skin in treated areas to appear shiny. As the healing process advances, you may also find a mild to severe itchy feeling. 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 your body heal differently. One side of your body may look or feel quite different from the other in the days following surgery. This is normal.

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 region anywhere that has been treated or bruising that is localized to one specific point of the breast.**

To alleviate any discomfort, and to reduce swelling, you may apply cool, not cold compresses to the treated region. Crushed ice or ice packs must be wrapped in a towel before being applied to the skin. Do not apply ice or anything frozen directly to the skin. Apply cool compresses for no longer than 20-minute intervals.

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.

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 you recover.

Recline, do not lie down flat. This will be more comfortable for you, and can reduce swelling. Always keep your head elevated. Do not bend forward or over.

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.

Do not change your incision dressings. You may have drain tubes which drain blood from where your breast tissue was removed. Follow the instructions for drain care and record drained fluid.

Wear your ace wraps around the clock.

DO NOT SMOKE. Smoking can greatly impair your safety prior to surgery and your ability to heal following surgery. **You must not smoke.**

Relax. Do not engage in any stressful activities. Do not lift, push, or pull anything.

TWO TO SEVEN DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY

During this time you will progress as each day passes. Ease into your daily activities. You will receive clearance to begin driving or return to work at your post-operative visit.

- You will have a post-op appointment 1 to 2 days after your surgery to remove your drain tubes. Do not take a shower until your drain tubes have been removed.

- You may shower after your drain tubes have been removed. **Do not sit in a bath. Make sure a responsible adult is home with you when you shower, as you may get light-headed.** Take a warm, not hot shower. Do not take a bath. Limit your shower to 10 minutes. Do not remove any steri-strips. Do not rub your incisions. You may apply a fragrance free moisturizer to the skin. Be sure to keep dressings clean and dry. A cotton swab with peroxide is appropriate for cleansing incisions. **It is usual to have some blood spots on the steri-strips with some oozing for a few days. You can cover the oozing areas with gauze squares or panty liners if necessary.** Do not remove any steri-strips even if they are over stitches. **Wear** sports bra 24 hours per day after your shower.
- **Take antibiotic medications and supplements as directed.** Take pain medication as needed. You may wish to switch from prescriptive pain medication to acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- **Continue to wear your surgical or sports bra around the clock.**
- **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, use sun protection including wearing protective clothing. Avoid any direct sun exposure.
- **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 wound care as directed.**
- **Refrain from weight-bearing exercise.** You may begin range of motion exercises but not with any weight, pressure or resistance of any kind. Continue walking. A daily, brisk 20-minute walk is recommended.
- **DO NOT SMOKE.** While incisions may have healed, smoking deprives your body of necessary oxygen that can result in poorly healed, wide, raised scars.
- **Continue to wear your surgical or sports bra as directed.** This is essential for your skin to conform to new contours. If your skin does not conform, revision procedures to reduce excess skin may be recommended.
- **Practice good sun protection.** Do not expose skin in regions treated with to direct sunlight/tanning beds. If you are outdoors, apply at least an SPF 30 to the treated region at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure and wear protective clothing. The skin in areas treated are highly susceptible to sunburn or the formation or irregular, darkened pigmentation.

SIX WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY

Healing will progress and your body settles into a more final shape and position.

- **You may ease into your regular fitness routine.** However realize that your body may require some time to return to previous strength.
- **Discomfort or tightness and tingling of the skin will resolve.**
- **No need to resume smoking.** You have now gone 6 weeks (2 weeks prior to surgery and 4 weeks following) without a cigarette. For your long-term health, there is no need to resume smoking.

YOUR FIRST YEAR

- **Continue healthy nutrition, fitness and sun protection.**
- **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.

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 or his staff any questions I have related to these instructions or about my procedure, health and healing.