

## POST-SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS: GYNECOMASTIA

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

**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. **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.

**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.**

**A severely misshapen region anywhere that has been treated with liposuction or bruising that is localized to one specific point of the lower body.**

**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. Keep your legs elevated to reduce swelling.

**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.**

**Change your incision dressings after 24 hours.** Your incisions will seep fluid and some blood for 1-2 days after surgery. Keep dressings clean and dry. A cotton swab with peroxide is appropriate for cleansing incisions. Apply anti-bacterial ointment over the incisions. You may shower after 24 hours, **then replace your compression garment.** You may need to replace gauze over your incisions if they are still leaking after 24 hours.

**Wear your compression garment around the clock.** Remove your compression garment only to shower and launder the garment.

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

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 may drive once you have stopped taking prescription pain medications.

**Continue to cleanse wounds as directed; you may shower.** Take a warm, not hot shower. Do not take a bath. Limit your shower to 10 minutes. Do not rub your incisions. You may apply a fragrance free moisturizer to the surrounding skin, however not on your incisions.

**Take antibiotic medications.** Take pain medication only as needed. You may wish to switch from prescriptive pain medication to acetaminophen or ibuprofen.

**Continue to wear your elastic compression garment around the clock.**

**Do not resume heavy exercise until after one week.** Walking or an exercise bike 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. You may feel lumpy areas under the skin which would benefit from manual massage.**

**You may resume weight-bearing exercise.** 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 compression garment 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. You may wish to purchase a second stage garment from a department store since your original garment may become loose.

**Practice good sun protection.** Do not expose skin in regions treated with liposuction to direct sunlight. 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 with liposuction is highly susceptible to sunburn or the formation of 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.

**You may stop wearing compression garments.**

**Discomfort or tightness and tingling of the skin will resolve.**

**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 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.

**Your body will change with age.** The appearance of your chest will change too. Although surgical correction of gynecomastia is generally permanent, any significant weight gain or loss, the use of steroids, hormones or marijuana, as well as the normal influences of aging can cause changes to your appearance. You may wish to undergo revision surgery at a later date 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 or his staff any questions I have related to these instructions or about my procedure, health and healing.**