



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING BREAST REDUCTION SURGERY

Patient Name _____

Date _____

Surgery Date _____

For you to have the best possible results after surgery it's important to follow these instructions.

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

TYPICAL POST-OPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

Typical symptoms of breast surgery; and signs to watch for following breast reduction surgery include the following:

Tightness in the chest region and stiffness; 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.**

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 breast's 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, the breasts look different, or heal differently: Breasts may look or feel quite different from one another in the days following surgery. This is normal; no two breasts are perfectly symmetrical in nature or following surgery.

CALL THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY AT 973-822-3000 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 bruising that is localized to one breast or region of the chest.**

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 for the first 24 hours following surgery.

Rest, but not complete bed rest. While rest is important in the early stages of healing, it is equally important for you to ambulate; which means that you should walk on your own. Spend 10 minutes every 2 hours engaged in light walking indoors as you recover.

Good nutrition: Fluids are critical following surgery. Drink plenty of water. Start with a bland diet today and advance as tolerated. Stick to non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free, and green tea-free beverages including fruit juices and water, milk, and yogurt drinks.

If you have drains, follow the separate drain care instructions provided to you.

Take all medication, exactly as prescribed:

- Percocet 5/325 mg 1-2 every 4 hours as needed for pain with food
- Vicodin 5/300 mg 1-2 every 4 hours as needed for pain with food
- Scopolamine Patch 1 mg transdermal. Apply behind ear 2 hours prior to surgery. Remove the following morning if no nausea/vomiting. Wash hands and area after removing the patch.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

Change your incision dressings. Wash your hands well with soap and water before performing any dressing changes. Your incisions will seep fluid and some blood for a **short** time after surgery. This is normal. Leave the gauze dressings in place. If you have a drain placed in your incisions, carefully follow the instructions for drain care and record drained fluid on the **Drain Care Instructions and Log.**

Wear a bra around the clock. Follow the instructions specifically and wear this garment at all times.

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 your hands over your head. Do not lift anything heavier than a paperback book. Take care of no one and let others tend to you.

TWO TO SEVEN DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY

During this time your healing will progress with each day that passes. Ease into your daily activities. You will receive clearance to begin driving or return to work at your post-operative visit, or within:

_____ days

Your post-operative visit is scheduled for: _____

- **Remove the outer gauze dressing but leave the steri-strips in place two days after surgery.** You may take a warm, but not hot shower; water and soap can run down your breasts but do not face the shower stream directly and limit your shower to 10 minutes. Do not take a bath. **Do not remove any steri-strips. Do not rub your incisions. Apply a fragrance free moisturizer to your breasts and surrounding skin, however not on your incisions.**
- **Take medications and supplements as directed.** Take pain medication only as needed. You may wish to switch from prescription pain medication to acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- **Continue to wear your 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.
- **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 incision care.

- **Continue your incision care as directed.**
- **Surgical scar management.** Apply silicone gel or sheeting as instructed by your surgeon starting 3-4 weeks after surgery, and after the incisions have healed.
- **Refrain from weight-bearing exercise, twisting or lifting anything over your head.** No tennis, golf, yoga, softball or other sports with similar swinging motions. Avoid aerobic exercise that may cause a lot of bouncing or increase your heart rate and blood pressure. You may begin range of motion exercises but not with any weight, pressure or resistance of any kind.
- **Do not smoke.** While your incisions may have sealed, smoking deprives your body of necessary oxygen that can result in sub-optimal, wide, raised scars.
- **Continue to wear a proper support bra.** The bra you first wore following surgery may feel somewhat loose. Discuss the appropriate breast garment to use with your surgeon. 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. If you want to wear an underwire bra, clarify it with your surgeon during the first 6 weeks after surgery.
- **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 to direct sunlight. If you are outdoors, apply at least an SPF 30 to the chest area at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure. Your chest region and breast skin are highly susceptible to sunburn or the formation of irregular, darkened pigmentation.

Follow-up as directed. Your second post-operative visit is scheduled for: _____

FOUR TO 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 its prior strength.** Avoid yoga or "extreme" stretching exercises. You may resume yoga at 3 months, but ask your surgeon if you would like to resume it sooner.
- **Continue to wear a proper support bra.** No underwire bra or restrictive garment for 6 weeks unless otherwise directed by your doctor.
- **Discomfort or tightness and tingling will resolve.** Any lingering nipple sensitivity or lack of sensation should begin to improve.
- **No need to resume smoking.** You have now gone 10 weeks (4 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

- **Practice monthly breast self exam.**
- **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 the best scars. Scars are generally refined to fine incision lines one year after surgery.
- **A 3, 6 and 12 month post-surgery follow-up is recommended.** However you may call our office at any time with your concerns or for needed follow-up.
- **After 6 months you can resume mammograms if that is appropriate for your age and history.**

Your body will change as you age. The appearance of your breasts will change too. 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 my doctor and his or her staff any questions I have related to these instructions or about my procedure, health and healing.

Patient Signature/Responsible Party

Date/Time

Printed Name /Relationship

Signature of Practice Representative and Witness