Abdominoplasty
(Tummy Tuck)
Post-Operative Instructions

What are my post-operative instructions?

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest and follow a balanced diet.
- Constipation is a side effect of decreased activity, use of pain medicines, and dehydration. Be sure to walk, drink fluids regularly, and consider adding raw fruit to your diet. Your doctor may prescribe a stool softener along with the narcotics. Call our office if constipation becomes an issue.
- Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your surgeon.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke or be around a smoker. This can be the most significant cause of serious healing issues.

What should my activity level be?

- Start walking as soon as possible - this helps to reduce swelling, lower the chance of developing blood clots and/or pneumonia, and avoid constipation.
- Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms, and can stop the car or swerve in an emergency, typically 4 weeks after surgery.
- Avoid lifting anything over 5 pounds for 6 weeks. This can be modified by your physician.
- Resume sexual activity as comfort permits, usually 2-3 weeks postoperatively.
- Avoid straining of abdominal muscles. Strenuous exercise and activities
are restricted for 8 weeks.

- Return to work in 6-8 weeks.

How do I take care of my incision?

- You may shower 48 hours after removal of the drainage tubes.
- Avoid exposing scars to the sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- No tub soaking while drains are in place and for 6-8 weeks following surgery.
- Wear your compression garment 24/7 as directed for 6 weeks post op.
- Place soft dressing over incisions and around drain sites daily to wick away moisture and to prevent irritation by garment along the incision line.
- Sleep with head slightly elevated and pillows under your knees to decrease tension on your incision.

How should I expect to feel?

- You may experience temporary soreness, bruising, swelling and tightness in the breasts as well as discomfort in the incision area.
- Most of the higher discomfort will subside after the first few days.
- You will have bruising and swelling of the abdomen. The majority of bruising and swelling will subside in 6-8 weeks.
- You may feel tired for several weeks or months.

What will it look like?

- Your abdomen will feel firmer with a narrower waistline.
- You will walk slightly bent forward and gradually return to normal posture over next 3 weeks.
• Keep steri-strips on. If your incision was closed with skin glue, it will slowly flake off over the first couple of weeks
• Scars will be reddened for 6 months. After that, they will fade and soften.
• The scar will extend from one hipbone to the other, low on the abdomen.

What follow-up care will I receive?
• A follow-up appointment for drain removal will be scheduled when less than 30 ml for 24 hours for 2 consecutive days.

When should I call my doctor?
• If you have increased swelling or bruising.
• If swelling and redness persist for a few days.
• If you have increased redness along the incision.
• If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
• If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting or constipation.
• If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
• If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
• If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
• If you have loss of feeling or motion.

Who should I call if I have questions?
• Clinic Phone (734) 998-6022
  For questions and prescription refills please contact our clinic at during office hours (Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)
• Hospital Paging (734) 936-6267
• After hours and on weekends, call and ask for the Plastic Surgeon on call.

How do I manage my pain?
Pre-operative Instructions:

- Prior to your surgery, pain medication will be prescribed by your Primary care physician or referring physician.
- If you do not have an established Primary care physician, please call the Physician referral service at 1-800-211-8181.
- To establish yourself with a primary care physician prior to your surgery, please schedule an appointment with the new primary care physician.

Post-operative Instructions:

- After having surgery, it is expected you will experience some pain even with pain medication. This is a normal part of recovery.
- You will be provided a prescription for pain medicine that will last until your first return post-op visit.
- At your first post-op visit, your pain will be evaluated. The surgical team will manage your pain for the acute recovery phase.
- Acute Pain management for major surgery is typically 6 to 12 weeks.
- Acute pain management for minor procedures is typically 7-10 days.
- You may not drive while you are taking narcotic pain medication or otherwise instructed by your surgical team.

Managing Prescription Refills:

- Please call the clinic at 734-998-6022 for medication refills.
- You may also contact us using the Patient Portal at https://www.myuofmhealth.org
- Messages received after hours or on the weekend will be processed the next business day.
- Please allow 24 hours or one business day to have your request reviewed by your surgical team.