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.
- Follow balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your physician.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Even when not taking pain medications, no alcohol for 3 weeks as it causes fluid retention.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

What should my activity level be?

- Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Social activities can be resumed 10-14 days after surgery.
- Avoid strenuous exercise and activities such as sports for 4 weeks.

How do I take care of my incision?

- If drainage tube(s) have been placed, you may shower 48 hours after
• Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
• Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
• Keep steri-strips on.
• Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.

**How should I expect to feel?**

• Postoperative pain is minimal.
• Your arms will be wrapped with ace wraps for compression immediately after surgery.
• You will be required to purchase a compression garment after surgery that is specific for your procedure.
• You will need to wear this garment 4-6 weeks after surgery. This is determined by your physician.
• There will be swelling and discoloration.
• There may be numbness around the operative areas.

**What will it look like?**

• There will be a scar in the underarm area; this scar will be hidden when arm is against body.
• If incision extends down to and around elbow, scar may be visible.

**What follow-up care will I receive?**

• Some sutures will be absorbed; remaining sutures will generally be removed in 1-2 weeks.

**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?

• (734) 998-6022, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
• After hours and on weekends, call Hospital Paging at (734) 936-6267 and ask for the Plastic Surgeon on call.