

Top Surgery

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.
- 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 surgeon.
- 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.
- Wear your chest compression vest 24/7 for 6 weeks post op.

What should my activity level be?

- Start walking as soon as possible, 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).
- Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms.
- No heavy lifting for 4-6 weeks (this is determined by your surgeon).
- Return to work when you feel well enough -- 1 or 2 days after surgery or 2 weeks, depending on type of job. Stay away from any job or sport that risks a blow to your chest for at least 4 weeks.

- Avoid sexual activity for 1-2 weeks and strenuous activity for 3-4 weeks.
- Full social activities can be resumed in 10-14 days.

How do I take care of my incision?

- 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.
- No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place.
- Wear your pressure garment continuously for 6 weeks, (unless otherwise instructed by your surgeon)

How should I expect to feel?

- Minimal to moderate postoperative pain (depending on how extensive the procedure is).
- Temporary bruising, swelling, soreness, burning sensation.
- The worst of your swelling will dissipate in a few weeks.
- All swelling and bruising should be gone in 3-6 months.
- Temporary loss of breast sensation or numbness, which may last up to a year.
- In about 4-6 weeks, you will be back to all of your normal activities.

What will it look like?

- Flatter, firmer, more masculine chest contour.
- Three or more months before final results are apparent.

What follow-up care will I receive?

- Drainage tubes are removed when the output is less than 30 ml for 1 -2 days (this will vary by surgeon)
- External sutures are removed 7-14 days after surgery.

When should I call my doctor?

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after 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.
- 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.

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Author: Erin Larowe
Reviewers: Patricia McKenzie, RN

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