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 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.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your surgeon.
- Do not drink alcohol, drive a car, or make important decisions 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 or be around a smoker. This can be the most significant cause of serious healing issues.
- Avoid prolonged exposure to the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Wear wide-brimmed hat and long sleeves if you will be in the sun for an extended time.
- Apply sunscreen frequently.
- Examine your skin regularly.

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).
- Unless stated on this form, discuss your time off work with your surgeon.

**How do I take care of my incision?**

- 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 steri-strips on until they start to curl up on the ends, and then gently remove them.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.

**What will it look like?**

Depending upon the type, size and location of the cancer, you may have a barely visible scar or a slightly larger, white scar or need a reconstructive procedure.

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

Have regular follow-up visits as scheduled by your doctor to ensure the cancer has not recurred.

**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, or 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.

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. It may include links to online content that was not created by UMHS and for which UMHS does not assume responsibility. It does not replace medical advice from your health care provider because your experience may differ from that of the typical patient. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

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