

Mark H. Peters, MD, FACS

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS BREAST REDUCTION

Our goal is for you to achieve the best possible result from your surgery. This requires participation from both you and our staff during the postoperative period. You should be familiar with these instructions in order to make the postoperative course a smooth one. We are happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have regarding your postoperative care.

- **INCISION:** You will see a shiny, clear “band aid”, (Dermabond skin glue) over the incision line. You may wash over it. Pat it dry. Do not apply any ointments, lotions, or creams over your incision line. The glue will peel off on its own in about 3 weeks. Your incision is closed with absorbable sutures, which will dissolve on their own.
- **BRA:** Do not wear an under wire or tight fitting bra until instructed to do so. You may wear a comfortable sports bra as support. You can sleep with your bra, it is up to you.
- **WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR:** If any signs of infection such as an area of redness, oral temperature over 101F, foul smelling drainage, or pain which is not relieved with medication, then you must call immediately to be evaluated. Dr. Peters’ office number is **(985) 223-2602**. After 5 PM, weekends, and holidays, your call will be transferred to our answering service.
- **ACTIVITY:** Avoid any strenuous physical activity including running or lifting children. Keep any lifting under 10 pounds. Light activity such as walking can resume after 2 weeks. Full activity will not begin for at least 6 weeks following the operation.
- **SMOKING:** Advise that you do not use any tobacco products for at least 14 days following your surgery.
- **ALCOHOL:** Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and may increase the chance of post-operative bleeding. It also contributes to dehydration. Please do not drink until you have stopped taking the prescription pain pills as this combination can be dangerous.
- **DRIVING:** Please do not drive for at least 10 days following general anesthesia. Depending on the type of surgery you had, you may need to avoid driving for a week. You should not drive while taking the prescription pain medication.
- **EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT:** It is recommended that you protect the incision lines from the sun for at least one year following surgery. Even with a bathing suit, sunlight can still reach the skin so application of sun screen is recommended.
- **ITCHING:** (without hives): Benadryl 25-50 mg every 6 hours.
- **GAS:** (caused by pain medication): Phazyme gel tabs.
- **CONSTIPATION:** (Caused by pain medication): Fruit juices, eat canned fruit, or Colace or Senecot stool softeners.
- **FEVER:** (without chills or body aches and less than 100 degrees): Two Tylenol every four hours. Look carefully at you incisions for any possible signs of infection.
- **POSTOPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS:** It is very important that you follow the scheduled appointments we establish for you after surgery.

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GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

- **SWELLING AND BRUISING** are the most common findings after surgery. The swelling typically peaks at 48 hours then gradually subsides. Generally, it takes about 6 weeks before a majority of the swelling has disappeared. Bruising is usually gone by 2 weeks. For the most part, these are expected in the postoperative period. If the swelling progresses significantly over a short period of time and is painful, then please contact the office.
- **PAIN** is, of course, expected in the postoperative period. The medication that was prescribed for you will provide some control of the pain. You should not be afraid to use your pain medication. If you seem to not react well to the medication, we can change the type of medication or simply decrease the amount you are taking.
- **DRAINAGE** from the incision varies but is expected. It is usually pink to reddish in color. You may simply change the dressing as needed over the incision. Liposuction patients will frequently experience a moderate amount of this drainage for about 48 hours (usually less).
- **FATIGUE** is another common finding following surgery. You will likely find that your energy level has decreased and performing everyday tasks, i.e. cleaning, cooking, working, are more difficult. It is not unusual to have this occur for up to 2-3 weeks following your procedure. In general, you can return to work a week after surgery, however, you may want to plan to work fewer hours initially.
- **NUMBNESS** in the skin of the breast is a common complaint which is present for 2-3 weeks following surgery. This is typically followed by itching and tingling. This is resolved by 4-6 weeks most of the time.

You may continue to use your prescribed narcotic medication as directed. Please ask Dr. Peters prior to initiating any other medications such as Ibuprofen or Vitamin E

I have reviewed the postoperative care instructions with _____; I understand these instructions and a copy has been provided to me.

Patient _____ Date _____