

## Mark H. Peters, MD, FACS

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### POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ABDOMINAL DERMATOLIPECTOMY (TUMMY TUCK)

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.

- **POSITION:** Because abdominal dermatolipectomy involves removal of extra abdominal skin, you will experience some difficulty standing up straight for 10 days to two weeks. When you are lying down or sleeping in a bed, you need to have your body in a slightly flexed position, bending at the waist. You may find it more comfortable placing a pillow or two under your knees. This tightness will gradually disappear as you heal and progressively use your body muscles for the activities of daily living. Please do not make any attempts to stretch or pull the abdomen straight during the first 2-3 weeks of healing.
- **DRESSINGS:** 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. You should begin to remove the glue at day 14-18. You may do this by lightly rubbing the area with Vaseline Petroleum Jelly. You may reinforce with any dressings as necessary.
- **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.
- **GARMENT:** A compression garment is placed on you immediately following your surgery. The style of garment is specifically chosen for you to cover where liposuction was performed on the body. You may remove the garment to shower, however we strongly suggest that you shower with **the garment on**. The garment should be worn 23 hours a day (the other hour is to bathe, etc.). It is very important that this be done in order to achieve the best results from your surgery.
- **ACTIVITY:** Abdominal dermatolipectomy is usually a moderate pain level depending on whether liposuction was performed. Most of the discomfort is during the first 10-14 days following surgery. You will not begin to feel “back to normal” for about 2-3 weeks. You may begin to go on leisurely walks after 2 weeks. **DO NOT OVER DO IT.** Too much activity will prolong the healing time.
- **SUTURES:** Your abdominal incision is closed with absorbable sutures, which dissolve on their own. The sutures around your belly button will be removed at about 10-14 days.
- **EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT:** It is recommended that you protect the incision lines from the sun for at least one year following surgery. Application of sunscreen is recommended under a bathing suit, since sunlight can reach the skin.
- **SMOKING:** We advise that you do not use any tobacco products for at least 14 days following your surgery.

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- **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 your surgery. You should not drive while taking the prescription pain medication.
- **ITCHING:** Benadryl (over the counter): 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.

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 \_\_\_\_\_