

Pre and Post-Operative Instructions for Belt Lipectomy Charleston Plastic Surgery

For a speedier recovery, please follow these instructions:

- Someone must be with you for the first 24-48 hours following surgery. This is to make sure you are taking your medicine properly, to assist you when walking [if needed] and to get in touch with us, as needed.
- You may experience a sore throat after surgery. This is common after anesthesia and will clear up in a few days.
- **NAUSEA:** Mild nausea is common after surgery. If you have moderate to severe nausea, please use Phenergan [suppository] as directed. If vomiting occurs, use ice chips until clear liquids can be tolerated.
- **PAIN:** You will be given prescription medications for pain and muscle spasms, please take as directed on the bottle. Starting the day after surgery we want you to take Ibuprofen. You will be taking this in addition to your prescription pain medication to help reduce inflammation and swelling. When you are off the prescription pain medicine, you are welcome to increase the Ibuprofen to reduce inflammation/swelling AND for pain. You may take Tylenol if you are allergic to Ibuprofen or if you are not allowed to NSAIDS. Please do not exceed 3200mg of Ibuprofen or 4g of Tylenol per day. Remember, narcotics may cause constipation, please drink plenty of water. You may use a stool softener if you have not had a bowel movement in 3 days.
- **SMOKING:** No nicotine is tolerated at least 4 weeks prior to surgery and for at least 8 weeks after surgery. Avoid secondary smoke. Nicotine will constrict blood vessels, leading to poor wound healing.
- **DRIVING:** Do not drive a car or operate machinery for at least 7-10 days after surgery (r/t you should be lying flat or standing: sitting is NOT recommended)
- **EXERCISE/ACTIVITY:** Please be sure to walk around the house the day after surgery to prevent post-operative complications. Please be sure to have assistance when you first get out of bed. Gradually work up to your normal daily routine. For the first week, you should not lift anything greater than 10lbs and walking should be your only form of exercise. Further lifting instructions will be given to you at your first post-operative appointment but typically you should not lift anything greater than 30lbs and only low impact exercises from week 2 to week 6.
- **REST:** When you return home from surgery, please try to rest as much as possible for the first 12 hours. **Sitting is not recommended for the first 7-10 days after surgery**, this will put excess strain on the incision and lead to complications. **Lying flat OR standing is recommended**. You may lay on your stomach or your back, as long as you use a “log roll” technique for position changes. *It is imperative that you begin light walking around the house the day after surgery to prevent post-operative complications.* Please be sure someone is with you when you get up for the first time.
- **COMPLICATIONS:** If you experience a sudden fever of 101 or greater, increased swelling, redness, heat, or profuse bleeding please call our office for advice: 843-722-1985

Specific Instructions:

- You can expect to have 1 or 2 drains in place when you wake up from surgery. These are suction drains that are very simple to care for. **The drainage bulb must stay compressed**. If the bulb is not compressed, the drain won't work. Drainage must be measured and recorded at least twice daily. Most often, drainage will be the consistency and color of blood for the first 24-48 hours. Drainage may start to decrease but it will start to increase with activity around 48-72 hours. Bloody drainage may start to become clear and can turn red, orange, or yellow. This is normal as long as there is a clear tint to the drainage. If there is pus or green drainage, please contact our office.

- You will leave surgery in an **abdominal binder**. You will wear this binder **24/7**. You will remove the girdle for showering and to launder. Drains will typically be removed 7-14 days after surgery depending on your drainage amount(s). Antibiotics are required the entire time you have a drain. Once your drain is removed, you will be placed in a **girdle**.
- You will be in a compression garment for a total of **6 weeks**. The first 2 garments will be provided to you. The girdle will be worn for 2-3 weeks. For the remaining 3 weeks, **you will need to purchase a high-waisted Spanx** compression garment to wear after the girdle.
- You will return to our office 48 hours after surgery to see the RN. We will perform your first dressing change and give further instructions at this appointment. Please leave the gauze in place until this appointment.

SHOWER INSTRUCTIONS:

- Remove abdominal binder and all surgical dressings (gauze/tape) prior to shower and **throw all gauze/tape away**.
- Wash your incisions with your fingers using a mild soap: DOVE (get everything nice & soapy)
- Once done showering. Gently pat all your incisions dry.
- Apply a **very thin layer** of Aquaphor/Flanders ointment to all incisions and cover with gauze/tape to protect incision line.
- Re-apply abdominal binder.
- *After 48 hours, you must shower daily (from the neck down) to prevent wound infection.*