

# Pre and Post-Operative Instructions for Breast Surgery

## Charleston Plastic Surgery

For a speedier recovery, please follow these instructions:

- Someone must be with you (around the clock) for the first 24-48 hours following surgery. This is to make sure you are taking your medicine properly, to assist you with walking (if needed) and to get in touch with us, as needed.
- Post-Operative prescriptions will be filled and ready for you to take home the day of surgery. Please review the pharmacists printed instructions as well as potential adverse reactions. *Please be sure to take your antibiotic until it is gone.*
- **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. You may experience a sore throat after surgery. This is common after anesthesia and will clear up in a few days.
- **PAIN:** You will be given prescription medications AFTER surgery for both pain and muscle spasms. Starting the day after surgery, begin taking Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin/Aleve). You will take this for pain and to help reduce inflammation and swelling. Once you are off the prescription pain medicine, you are welcome to increase the Ibuprofen dosage. You may take Tylenol if you are allergic to Ibuprofen or if you are not allowed to NSAIDS. Remember, narcotics can cause constipation, please drink plenty of water and make sure you are up and walking. You may use a stool softener if you have not had a bowel movement in 3 days (milk of magnesia: take every 6 hours until you have a B.M.)
- **SMOKING:** NO NICOTINE is tolerated for 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 24 hours and until you are no longer taking narcotics.
- **EXERCISE/ACTIVITY:** Make sure to **walk around the house the day after surgery** to prevent post-operative complications. Gradually work up to your normal daily routine. For the first 5-7 days after surgery, you should not lift/push/twist/pull anything greater than 10lbs and walking should be your only form of exercise. From weeks 2-6 post-op you should avoid lifting/pushing/pulling anything greater than 30lbs. Only exercise (walking) for 6 weeks post-op while recovering and until your doctor clears you.
- **REST:** You will need to sleep on your BACK and ELEVATED. [Use 2-3 extra pillows, a wedge, or you can sleep in a recliner] This will help reduce swelling and discomfort.
- **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:

- *\*IF\* you have drains, the care will be described to you at the Surgery Center before you leave. The bulbs **must stay compressed** and the drainage should be measured and recorded at least twice daily on the drainage output sheet. Bring this sheet to ALL your post-op visit appointments.*
- **1<sup>st</sup> shower = not until 48 hours (2 days) AFTER surgery.** you WILL SHOWER ON →
  - Remove open-front bra 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.

- Re-apply surgical bra.
- *After 48 hours, you must shower daily (from the neck down) to prevent wound infection.*
- **BREAST AUGMENTATION (implants):** \*IF\* you are placed into a *sub-pectoral bra* after surgery, wear it 24/7 and only remove for showering. This band will help the implants drop quicker, your doctor will instruct you when to stop wearing the sub-pectoral bra.
- As your incisions heal you may experience pain, tenderness, numbness, or itching. There may also be oozing of blood or clear/yellow/pink/red fluid, this is NORMAL. Spot bleeding, scabbing, and bruising are NORMAL after surgery (and expected).
- You will return for your 1<sup>st</sup> follow-up appointment 1 week after surgery. Further post-op instructions will be given at this appointment.
- YOU will need to ***purchase a molded cup sports bra*** 1 week after surgery. *A teaching sheet of this will be given to you at your first post-operative appointment.* [**\*\***you will be wearing this bra weeks 2-6 of your recovery so you may want to get several]
- DO NOT apply heat or ice to the surgical site.
- DO NOT massage your breasts until instructed.
- DO NOT submerge incisions in water (NO bath, hot tub, ponds, oceans, lakes, and/or pools) until cleared by your doctor. Showers only for the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 weeks.
- Please refrain from strenuous body exercise for the entire 6 weeks after surgery. All 6-weeks post-surgery you will be required to **wear a bra 24/7** [except when showering, if is in the wash, or your doctor instructs you otherwise].