

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.
- **SURGERY CENTER PATIENTS ONLY:** Post-Operative prescriptions will be filled and ready for you to take home the day of surgery. Please review the pharmacist's printed instructions as well as potential adverse reactions. *Please be sure to take your antibiotic until it is gone.*
- **HOSPITAL PATIENTS ONLY:** You will pick up your prescriptions the day PRIOR to your surgery from our Charleston ENT Pharmacy (here in this office: West Ashley). Please review the pharmacist's printed instructions as well as potential adverse reactions.
- **INSURANCE (breast reduction or reconstruction) PATIENTS:** You will need to purchase a sports bra that opens in the front, and is TWO band sizes BIGGER than your current band size. *Please bring this (or wear this) with you on your date of surgery.* You will be placed in this bra post-operatively and you will wear it 24/7 for approximately one week. You may remove the bra to shower/laundry.
- **NAUSEA:** Mild nausea is common after surgery. If you have moderate to severe nausea, please use Phenergan 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 for pain and for muscle spasms, please take as directed on the bottle. Starting the day after surgery we want you to take Ibuprofen 200mg, 4 times per day if not contraindicated (ie – history of bariatric surgery). 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 during the day, you are welcome to increase the Ibuprofen to reduce inflammation/swelling AND for pain. Please do not exceed 3200mg of Ibuprofen 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 24 hours and until you are no longer taking narcotics.
- **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 4 weeks, 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.
- **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:** Complications, albeit uncommon, may occur following any surgical procedure. These may include (but are not limited to) bleeding, infection, damage to surrounding structures, scarring, tissue necrosis, wounding, change in nipple sensation, loss of nipple sensation, nipple loss (partial or complete), capsular contracture (for breast augmentation patients), fluid accumulation (seroma), residual laxity of the skin, asymmetry, fat necrosis, contour irregularity, changes in skin sensation, DVT/PE or need for future surgery. 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/Hospital 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.*
- **1st shower = not until 48 hours (2 days) AFTER surgery.** you WILL SHOWER ON →
 - Remove bra prior to shower
 - Wash your incisions with your fingers using a mild soap: DOVE (get everything nice & soapy). It is OK for the tape to get wet
 - Gently pat all your incisions dry.
 - Re-apply surgical bra.
- *After 48 hours, you must shower daily (from the neck down) to prevent wound infection.*
- **BREAST AUGMENTATION:**
- 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. Spot bleeding, scabbing, and bruising are NORMAL after surgery (and expected).
- You will return for your **1st follow-up appointment 1 week after surgery.** Further post-op instructions will be given at this appointment.
- YOU will need to *purchase a sports bra* that opens in the front. You will wear a sports bra or surgical bra for 3 months and should fit snugly.
- DO NOT apply heat or ice to the surgical site.
- DO NOT massage your breasts until instructed.
- DO NOT submerge incisions in water (bath, hot tub, ocean, lake, pool) until cleared by your doctor. Showers only for the 1st 2-3 weeks.
- Please refrain from strenuous body exercise for the entire 4 weeks after surgery.
- It is OK to use moisturizer on your skin about 1 week after surgery. We do not recommend utilizing formal scar gels or sheets over the incision line until about 6 weeks after surgery. Any scar gel or sheeting containing silicone is sufficient.