



Breast Surgery Postop Instructions

Cosmetic Surgery Clinics
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Patient: _____ MR# _____

Procedures: _____

1. Position: For at least the first week after surgery, try to sleep on you back, instead of your side. Two pillows to elevate and support both your head and your back will help to keep the swelling down.
2. Dressings: At the time of surgery gauze dressings will be applied around the chest as well as a surgical bra and strap. These will be removed at the first postoperative visit. Surgical bra and/or strap should be worn at all times for the first 4 weeks.
3. If drains are in place, secure the bulb of the drain to your clothes or dressings using a safety pin. Every four hours or whenever the bulb is half full, you should empty the bulb by opening the plug at the top and pouring out the contents. Do not attempt to remove the bulb from the tubing. Squeeze the bulb to recompress it, and put the plug back into the hole at the top in order to maintain the vacuum. If the bulb fills rapidly after emptying it, with bright red or dark blood, please call the office. The doctor or nurse will remove the drains 4-5 days after surgery when the fluid begins to turn a clear straw color and/or the amount of drainage has diminished.
4. Sutures: Sutures will be removed 7 to 14 days following surgery.
5. Exposure to sunlight: Scars take at least 1 year to fade completely. During this time, it is better that you protect them from the sun. Even through a bathing suit, a good deal of sunlight can reach the skin and cause damage. It is imperative that you wear a sunscreen with a skin-protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 at all times when you are in the sun.
6. Showering and Bathing: You may shower 36 hours after surgery. Small dressings (steri-strips) may remain in place when showering and do not have to be removed until they fall off on their own.
7. Healing of sensory nerves: Tingling, burning or shooting pains (which will disappear with time should not alarm you) indicate regeneration of the sensory nerves. If these sensations cause pain, gentle self-massage helps.
8. Asymmetry: The two breasts commonly heal quite differently. One breast may swell more, feel more uncomfortable, or have a different initial shape. After complete healing, they will look remarkably similar and natural. You must have patience, but if this causes concern, ask questions of the doctor or the nursing staff.
9. Activities: Any type of strenuous activity can induce swelling and bleeding, especially during the first 10-14 days after surgery. In general, guide your activities by your discomfort – that is, if an activity hurts, do not do it. If your job keeps you sedentary, you may feel well enough to return to work in 7-10 days. If the swelling or discomfort increases, you have probably done too much too soon. **If breast implants were used in your surgery, exercise should be avoided for 4 weeks.**
10. Massage: If breast implants were used in your surgery, you will begin breast massage as instructed by your doctor the second day after surgery.

9. Return Visit: _____ Days Date: _____ Time: _____

Responsible Party Signature: _____ Phone: _____ Date _____