

After Abdominoplasty Instructions

It is very important that you **do not smoke, do not wear a nicotine patch, or do not chew nicotine gum** in the first 3 weeks after surgery. Severe scarring may result from failure to observe this precaution.

Medications: (you may be given all or some of the following medications depending on your surgery)

- Pain Medication: You may take it every 4 hours as needed. Do not drive a vehicle or operate heavy machinery while using this medication.
- Anti-Nausea Medication: In the event that you experience nausea or vomiting, take this medicine. While you may not need it, it is advisable to fill the prescription just in case.
- Stool Softener: Your pain medicine can cause constipation, and excess strain and pressure can not only be unpleasant, but may hurt your incisions. Please take this while on the Pain Medication.
- Muscle Relaxant/Anti-anxiety Medication: This will help relax the muscles involved in your procedure, which will help with pain control and should help you sleep.

Although you have been given a prescription for pain medication, you may only need regular Tylenol, and should try it first. If your stomach becomes irritated or upset, stop the medication.

Do not use Ibuprofen or aspirin containing products which may increase your chances of bleeding complications.

Surgical site care:

- Please have someone available to drive you home from the office and remain with you the first night after surgery. You do not, however, need medical care, only "TLC."
- You may remove bandages the day after your surgery.
- You may shower after your bandages are removed. Do not allow direct high pressure shower spray to hit incisions. Do not soak incisions.
- Wash incisions and drain sites once a day with soap and water.
- Leave steristrips in place. Do not remove the steristrips.
- Place new, dry gauze bandages and tape over the incisions if needed. Avoid tight clothing.
- Slight signs of blood may show on the bandages and this is normal.

Drain care:

- Empty and record drainage from drains every 12 hours. A drain will not be removed until there is less than 30ml of output from the drain in a 24 hour period.
- Call office 417-820-9340 in 5 days to report your drain output. This will determine when your follow-up appointment is scheduled.
- Your drain will be removed typically after 10 days.

Activities:

- You may experience some pain and discomfort for 3 to 4 weeks, although it should decrease considerably from the first 1 to 2 days.
- Exparel® a long-acting pain medication was used during your procedure. It is specifically designed to release pain medication over time and can control pain for up to 72 hours after surgery. It is normal to experience an increase in pain 2-3 days after surgery, once this medication has worn off.
- You may experience some numbness around the incision line that will diminish with time.
- Rest with your head of the bed at about 30° elevation, especially when you sleep.
- No heavy lifting for four (4) weeks. Do not push, pull or lift anything heavy (over 20lbs) for 6 weeks.
- You may ambulate the night of your procedure. Walk with assistance to the bathroom, living room, etc. starting the night of your procedure. You are not on bed rest.
- You may want to walk with the abdomen bent to relieve stress in the abdominal muscles and incisions. Avoid stretching.
- Plan your daily activities to minimize the number of times you will have to go up and down the stairs.
- Avoid strenuous activity, getting overheated or sunbathing for three weeks. Avoid blowing your nose, coughing, straining, or raising your blood pressure.
- Do not engage in sexual activity for a minimum of two weeks after surgery.

Return to Particular Activities

- 2 weeks after surgery: may begin walking
- 4 weeks after surgery: may begin light upper body weight lifting
- 6-8 weeks after surgery: may begin abdominal workouts, squats, core strengthening
- 3 months after surgery: may begin pull-ups and back bend exercise
- Slowly graduate into yoga activities (do not stretch yourself out too fast).

Diet:

- You may drink small amounts of liquids as desired and as tolerated the first night. The following day, a soft diet is suggested and after that you may eat and drink as desired, with the exception of alcohol, which must not be taken for three days after surgery.
- Drink plenty of fluids/water (eight 8oz glasses a day).

Follow-up appointments: (Please call the Mercy Clinic Medical Spa at 417-820-9340 to schedule your appointment.)

- 1 week after surgery: Depending on drain output, one of your drains may be removed at this time. You will be fitted for a garment at this visit.
- 2 weeks after surgery: Depending on drain output, the other drain may be removed at this time.
- 2 months after surgery: Monitor healing and instructions will be given on how to minimize scar appearance.

Watch for the following signs and symptoms. Notify the Mercy Clinic Medical Spa (820-9340) immediately if these occur:

- Fever or blistering.
- Redness that looks like a sunburn, tenderness or warmth in the area of redness.
- Sudden increase in one sided pain.
- Swelling that is much greater on one side.
- Sudden increase in drainage.
- Bruising is **NORMAL**.

Call the Mercy Clinic Medical Spa 417-820-9340 if you have any questions.