

Breckenridge Surgery Center

Post-Operative Instructions

Post-operative Instructions for Breast Surgery

- You **must** have someone available to drive you home after surgery. It is important to have another responsible person available to assist you in the first 2-3 days after your surgery.
- It is extremely important that you take short walks every 1-2 hours in your home up until bedtime to prevent clots in your legs. We want this to **start the day of surgery**.
- () Incentive Spirometry (IS): If you are given an IS, with every walk, we want you to expand your lungs, thus the expression “walk and breathe every hour.” Take 5 breaths every hour while awake with the IS until are you back to your normal mobility/daily activities.
- Slight fever during the first 48 hours is a natural reaction your body has and is **normal** after surgery. The Tylenol in your pain medication will help control a fever. If your temperature is over 101, it is **most likely** because you are not walking or deep breathing enough. If your fever stays higher than 101 for more than 8 hours and does not respond to walking, deep breathing, or coughing, call your doctor’s office at
 - 972-470-5000.
- We do not recommend wearing a bra with underwire for the first 4-6 weeks due to the discomfort of the pressure the underwire puts on the incision. Bras you can wear are listed below, or you can also go bra-less:
 - Minimum support bra
 - Loose fitting sports bra
 - Bandeau bra
- Sleep with the head of your bed elevated or in a recliner for the first 48 hours to help reduce swelling.
- If you had liposuction:
 - If possible, sleep with areas of liposuction elevated to help decrease welling. Some people choose to sleep in a recliner for the first several nights.
- () Foley Catheter: You may have had a catheter placed in your bladder during your surgery. It is **normal** to have some irritation or burning when you urinate during the first 24 hours after surgery. Although this is rare, **If you cannot urinate within 8 hours after getting home, you will need to go to the nearest Emergency Department to have a catheter placed.**

Pain Medications

- If prescribed Hydrocodone (Norco) or Oxycodone Acetaminophen (Percocet): **Please use as prescribed.**
 - Take with food and drink lots of fluids
 - Do **not** take more than 8 tabs of your prescription medication in 24 hours
 - **Warning:** You **cannot** take any additional Tylenol (acetaminophen) while taking these medications (there is already Tylenol in them)
 - You **can** take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications to help with pain while taking these medications. These include:
 - Advil/Motrin (Ibuprofen) – 400 to 600mg up to 3 times a day *with food*
 - Aleve (Naprosyn) – Twice a day *with food*
 - **Warning:** Do not take these additional medications if you have a history of ulcers or significant reflux
 - Begin tapering medications down after your 3rd to 5th day after surgery. Taper down to one tab every 4-6 hours
 - Your prescription medications (Hydrocodone/Norco or Percocet) can cause constipation. The best way to prevent this is to stop taking the prescribed medications as soon as possible. Drink lots of fluids and take a stool softener, such as Colace/Docusate, if needed while you are taking the prescribed pain medications.
- ***For questions concerning your post-operative medications, please call your doctor's office at 972-470-5000*****

Surgical Dressings

___ **STERI-STRIPS:** Your incisions are closed with steri-strips (small white strips of bandaid like material). They will fall off on their own or your doctor may remove them at your follow up appointment. You may trim the edges as they start to fray. Do **not** use antibiotic ointment on steri-strips, it makes them fall off too fast.

___ **SUTURES:** Your incision has been closed with sutures. You have Xeroform (yellow medicated gauze) over the sutures. You can remove the Xeroform right before you shower and throw it away. After you dry the incision, apply a thin layer of Bacitracin ointment or Mupirocin ointment over the incision for the

next 3 days and then reapply your other dressing the physician put on your wound, (gauze, maxi pads, ace wrap).

___ **ABD/NETTING:** You will have an absorbent padding (ABD's) and netting to hold on dressings. You can throw away the ABD's right before you shower and re-apply gauze or maxi pads if needed to help with drainage after you shower. The netting can also be re-used to keep the dressings on if needed.

___ **GLUE (DERMABOND):** Your incision has been closed with surgical glue. Do not pick at the glue, it will fall off on it's own in 7-10 days. **Do not** put antibiotic ointment on the glue because it will cause it to degrade. If there is no drainage, no extra dressings need to be added.

___ **ACE WRAP/BANDAGE:** You will have an ACE bandage that is wrapped around you. Remove when you shower and reapply the ACE bandage after you have reapplied your other dressings to hold them in place. For first time breast augmentation patients, keep ACE wrap on for the first 3 days after surgery.

___ **TEGADERM:** You may have a clear water-proof dressing (Tegaderm) covering the incision. This dressing will stay in place until your follow-up appointment. If you notice water under the dressing, you can remove the dressing and leave the incision open to air. It is better to remove the dressing than to have a wet one.

___ **NIPPLE GUARDS:** You may have nipple guards. You can remove these and your other dressings before you shower and reapply them after your shower. If your tegaderm/gauze becomes soiled, apply antibiotic ointment instead and reapply the nipple guards. You can use gauze and netting, tape, or a non-compression bra with no underwire to hold them in place. Wear nipple guards until your first follow up appointment.

___ **COMPRESSION GARMENT:** You have received a compression garment prior to your surgery. Please use as directed by your doctor.

What to expect

- It is very common to have altered sensation of your breasts. This usually returns to normal within a few months.
- If you have implants:
 - It is normal to feel like the implants are not part of your body. It takes 3-4 weeks for your breasts to soften and feel more natural.
 - You may hear some sloshing or squeaking sounds around your implants in the first 4-6 weeks after surgery, especially with airline flights. This is normal.

- Your implants may appear high on the chest but will eventually settle in position within 3-6 months.
- If you had liposuction:
 - There is typically quite a bit of drainage or blood-tinged fluid from the liposuction incisions. This is **normal** for the first 24-72 hours after surgery. The fluid that is draining out is usually the fluid that was placed into the fatty tissue during surgery to make it easier to remove the fat. Change out the ABD's, gauze, or maxi pads frequently when they become saturated.
 - It is best to have plastic protectors or puppy pads for the bed, couch, or recliner where you plan to sleep and sit.
 - It is normal to experience pulling or pinching sensations for weeks and sometimes months after surgery at the liposuction sites.
 - Liposuction scars are usually small. They may be red and raised for 3-6 months. They can take up to a full year to remodel, soften, and fade.
 - It is normal to have numbness and/or weakness.
 - Swelling and/or bruising is to be expected for several weeks. It is common to have swelling around the body including feet, ankles, and legs even if that area was not operated on.
 - It is common to weigh more than you did before the surgery for the first few weeks after the surgery due to the swelling and extra fluid. This will improve over time.
- Your first appointment after surgery will be within 5-14 days. If you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call your doctor's office at:
972-470-5000

Activities

- You can begin showering **24 hours** after surgery. Do **not** immerse your incisions in a bathtub, pool, hot tub, or lake for **at least 3 weeks**.
- No strenuous exercise, heavy lifting, pushing, or pulling until you have seen your doctor at your first follow up appointment.
- Low impact cardio can be resumed after 72 hours or as instructed by your doctor.
- **No** driving within the first 24 hours of your surgery, and **do not** drive within 6 hours of taking prescription pain medication.
- You may resume normal activities, such a light chores or shopping, as tolerated. Usually this is within 2-3 days.

- Work may be resumed in 1-3 days depending on how you feel and your job requirements.
- You may resume sexual activity when comfortable to do so. This is typically 1-2+ weeks after surgery but entirely up to the individual person. It is important to **avoid direct pressure to the breasts during the first 4 weeks.**

Call the office immediately or go to the ER for any of the following:

- Your condition worsens, or you have a sudden onset of the following symptoms, as these can be signs of a more serious problem:
 - Pain that is not controlled with medication
 - Fever (Greater than 101 for over 8 hours)
 - Nausea and/or vomiting
 - Bleeding (different from the blood-tinged drainage)
 - Inability to urinate
 - Dizziness or shortness of breath
 - Rash
 - Rapid heartbeat or rapid breathing

Your Doctor's office can be reached 24 hours a day at
972-470-5000.

If the doctor's office phone is not being answered, please call the Surgery
Center at **972-470-5859.**

The Surgery Center is available Monday-Friday, 7am-3pm

Instructions given by: _____
PACU RN

Instructions received by: _____
Patient caregiver

Date: _____