



Mastopexy (Breast Lift) Post-Operative Care Guide

MORNING OF SURGERY

- Do not eat or drink anything at all for at least 6 hours prior to surgery.
- Do not wear contact lenses, wigs, hairpins, hairpieces or jewelry. Dress in old, loose, comfortable clothes. Wear slip-on shoes.
- Have someone drive you to your surgery and make certain someone will be available to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours. Put a pillow and blanket in the car for the trip home. A vehicle that allows you to recline is best.
- Do not smoke.

WHAT ARE MY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS?

- Get plenty of rest and follow balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

WHAT SHOULD MY ACTIVITY LEVEL BE?

- Start walking as soon as possible, this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Minimal activities for the first 4 days after surgery.
- Sleep on your back for first 2 weeks.
- Do not drive a car for 3 weeks; after 3 weeks, only drive car with automatic shift and power steering.
- Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms.
- Do not raise arms above shoulders for first 4 days after surgery. Then, gradually increase arm activity.
- No heavy lifting greater than 5 kg for 4 weeks.
- Avoid strenuous exercise and activities for 6 weeks.

- Employment activities can be resumed in 4 weeks (this will vary depending on your type of work).

HOW DO I TAKE CARE OF MY INCISION?

- If drainage tubes have been placed, you may shower 48 hours after removal.
- If there are no drains, then you may shower 72 hours after surgery.
- When showering, remove binder and dressings. Allow water to run down chest, no vigorous scrubbing. Avoid soap to breasts for 1 week. Leave incision tapes in place, if possible. Place a gauze dressing over each nipple and put binder back on.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- You may ice your chest for the first week to decrease swelling and pain. Avoid heat to prevent a burn to the skin.
- No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place.
- Leave dressing on for length of time prescribed by your surgeon.
- If your incision was closed with steri-strips, they will generally start to fall off in ~10-14 days. You may trim loose ends, but do not remove adherent strips.
- Wear your surgical bra 24/7 for at least 6 weeks post-op. Then, you can stop wearing a bra while sleeping. No underwire bras for minimum of 8 weeks and possibly longer if area under fold is tender.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 50 or greater).
- Drainage tubes are removed when the 24 hour output is less than 50 ml x 2 days.
- Sutures are removed in 7-14 days.

HOW SHOULD I EXPECT TO LOOK AND FEEL?

- There may be postoperative pain, temporary bruising, discomfort, numbness, dry breast skin, chest tightness, swelling and discoloration.
- May be some hypersensitivity or loss of sensation in the nipples.
- Scars will fade in several months to a year.
- Wearing a bra helps to maintain your new appearance.
- You can expect some asymmetry in your breasts.

WHEN SHOULD I CALL MY DOCTOR?

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist for a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.

- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting or constipation.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100°F.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul smell.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you develop increased pain in your calves, shortness of breath, or chest pain.
- If you develop any symptoms of concern not mentioned above.

