

General Instructions Following **Breast Surgery**

***If you have increasing redness around the incision sites, thick drainage, or fever above 101°F call the office as soon as possible (314-434-1211) to speak with our clinical staff.**

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Everyone's pain tolerance is different. You will be sore for 3 days following your surgery. Each day will get better, thereafter (*i.e. you will begin to notice improvement on day 4-5*). However, you may not feel 100% improved for 6-8 weeks after surgery, depending on your surgery.
- You may or may not turn black and blue around your incision and surrounding tissue. Gravity will push this down as it resolves.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Apply ice to incision for 1st day after your surgery in 15-20 minute increments. *Be sure to place a towel between your skin and the ice pack to avoid direct contact. Not very effective after 24 hours.*
- If you have small strips of tape directly on your skin (steri-strips) under your dressing, leave those on and do not remove them *until 7-10 days after surgery*.
- If you do not have a drain, you may shower **2 full days after** your surgery. Remove the dressing. Leave steri-strips on.

MEDICATIONS

- You may be sent home with prescription pain medicine. Try to first control pain with over the counter Tylenol or Ibuprofen (*Advil*), following package instructions. Use the narcotic pain prescription only if the Tylenol or Ibuprofen is not effective.
 - You **should not** drive while on pain medicine.
 - All narcotics cause severe constipation, as well as nausea and vomiting.
- If you take the prescription pain medicine, it is a good idea to take a stool softener to counteract constipation. You can also take Milk of Magnesia, MOM. All are over the counter.
 - If this is not effective in producing a bowel movement in **2 days**, please call our office for more instructions.

RESTRICTIONS

- You should not do any strenuous exercise for 4-6 weeks unless directed otherwise. No lifting over 10-15 lbs. (Ex: a gallon of milk weighs 8 lbs)

- You may walk as much as you want.

SURGERY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- *For less extensive breast surgeries (Breast biopsy):* You may find comfort in wearing a bra for 24 hours after your surgery.
- *Lumpectomy:* Wear either the breast jacket that was provided to you at surgery, or your own bra, day and night for approximately 1 week for support of the breast.
- *Mastectomy:* If you have a J-P drain in, (Jackson Pratt) you will not be able to shower until the drain is removed. This usually is removed in the office on the 3rd-5th post op day (*or when drainage greatly decreases*). The doctor will tell you when this should be removed. You will call the office to make that appointment with the nurse or doctor.
 - Please empty the drain twice a day and record the output.
 - After emptying, be sure to squeeze the bulb tightly to collapse it before placing the cap to ensure there is suction.
 - You do not need to save the fluid for your surgeon to see.
- *Breast Jacket* – leave breast jacket on and dressing in place until seen in our office for your drain removal.

FOLLOW UP

- Call the office for a “**post-op**” visit 1-2 weeks after your surgery.
 - *If staples are present, they will not be removed until 12-16 days post-op*
- If you have increasing redness around the incision, drainage, or fever above 101°F call the office.
 - Your incision site(s) *may* drain.
 - Do **NOT** soak healing incision site(s) – i.e. a bath, hot tub, swimming pool
 - Clear to light pink/red drainage is normal a few days after surgery
 - You may apply loose dressings to stop any drainage from soiling clothing.

The office is open for phone calls from 8am - 5 pm Monday-Thursday, Friday 8am -4 pm. For after hours, call the Medical Exchange @ 314-364-5262 to speak to the surgeon on call.

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