

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ABDOMINOPLASTY (TUMMY TUCK SURGERY)

Your greatest discomfort will be within the first 24-28 hours after your surgery. Take your pain medication as prescribed. Take aspirin medication with crackers, toast, soups, or liquids to avoid nausea that can occur on an empty stomach.

Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, Advil, etc. as listed on the general surgery information list.

DRAINS

Drains should be emptied and measured daily. Keep drain sites clean especially at the pubic area to avoid crusting, which can lead to infection. Follow the nursing instruction sheet that is provided for you.

DRESSINGS

Your dressing consists of steri strips or clear plastic tapes. A white gauze dressing is on top, secured by tape. Typically, the white gauze on top of the steri-strips can be removed the day or two after surgery, however, the steri-strips are kept in place.

A girdle or abdominal binder may be given to you by your surgeon for comfort reasons only. If you have a binder or support garment, an attempt should be made to wear the garments most of the day, as desired for comfort. The garments can and should be removed for bathing purposes. It is often common to have bruising and swelling for 2-3 weeks. The girdle or compression garment should not be applied too tightly as this can lead to healing difficulty. **If you feel discomfort with your binder or garment, or see blisters, you should stop use of the device immediately and call the office.**

DO NOT USE HOT OR COLD WATER BOTTLES OR COMPRESSES.

ACTIVITY

You may shower 24 hours after the surgery with assistance. Remove the entire gauze dressing, but **DO NOT REMOVE THE STERI-STRIP COVERINGS**. The area can be blotted dry and showering with a clean cloth. If the steri-strips fall off on their own, there is no need to re-apply any form of gauze.

You will need to ask your surgeon about how long to stay off work, depending on the type of abdominoplasty.

Limit your activity to daily routine. **Avoid** lifting, pushing, or pulling objects that require you to strain or stress. This will cause pressure and stress to your surgical area.

Check with your surgeon before resuming driving or exercise.

SLEEPING

Avoid sleeping on your stomach until all soreness has subsided. You may find sleeping on 3 pillows and/or 2 pillows under your knees may be comforting, as bringing yourself from a lying position to a sitting position causes a great deal of stress to your abdomen.

COMPLICATIONS

Call your physician if any of the following occur:

- **Severe pain not responding to pain medication**
- **Excessive pain with swelling in the abdomen with redness, warmth, or hardening**
- **Bleeding or odorous draining that does not subside**

We recommend a stool softener, such as Surfalk, Colace, or Docusate to avoid constipation, as this is a common side effect of the various pain medications. The stool softener can be taken 2-3 times per day to prevent such difficulty.

If there are any concerns or questions, call (312) 695-6022 and the physicians and/or nurses will be able to assist you immediately.