



POST OP BREAST SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Showering and incision care

You may start to shower 48 hours after surgery. However, you will need to wait until after the sutures are removed before you can soak the incision in a bathtub or pool. If you have bolsters (yellow flower shape dressing) on your nipple area, those need to stay dry until you are seen for your post op appointment. During the first few weeks after surgery, wear a supportive bra. Do not wear a bra with underwire for at least 6 weeks after surgery. An underwire may cause skin breakdown or cause the incision to open up.

Tegaderms (a clear plastic tape) and glue are usually placed over your incisions. You may use soap and water over these and dab the area dry. With time as they begin to peel, trim only the peeled portions. Do not remove the entire tegaderm unless it is loose.

If there is no tegaderm on the incisions, apply BACITRACIN twice daily until sutures are removed.

Activity

- Exercise your lower extremities while you are in bed. This will reduce the risk of developing blood clots in your legs.
- Flex and point your feet
- Do ankle rolls
- Bend and straighten your knees
- Do this several times a day until you are walking as much as usual
- You may walk and climb stairs as soon as you feel fit to do so without any restrictions.
- Do not lift anything over 10 pounds for at least 2 weeks after surgery.
- Do not take part in sports or any strenuous activities for at least 4 weeks after surgery

Smoking

Do not smoke for at least 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after surgery. Stay away from places where people do. Smoking can slow healing and cause skin breakdown. It can also cause death of tissues.

Sun and heat exposure

Your surgery will leave a scar and it may take well over a year to fade and blend in with surrounding skin. No matter how small the scar, sunlight can cause permanent darkening of your scar. Sunlight can even go through your clothes.

Do not expose your incision/scar to direct sunlight for a year from the time of surgery. Use sunscreen with a SPF for at least 30 when you go out. Wait for 3 weeks from the date of surgery before starting to use sunscreen.

Do not use heat of any kind (heat lamp, heating pad, sauna, hot tub, tanning booth) for at least 12 weeks after surgery or permanently if you have areas of decreased sensation around the scars.

Other instructions

For 10 days after the operation, do not use Aspirin, ibuprofen or similar medications. You may use regular Tylenol.

You should do breathing exercises for one week after surgery or until you are able to get up and walk around comfortably. This is to prevent pulmonary complications of general anesthesia.

Do not drive, operate machinery or make important decisions when taking narcotic pain medicine. They can make you sleepy and slow your reaction time.

Do not use any scar creams on the incisions until your sutures are removed.

When to call

- Call the office if you are unable to tolerate food or liquids for more than 24 hours
- Call the office if you are vomiting for more than 24 hours or become dehydrated even if less than 24 hours.
- Call the office immediately for a fever of 101.0F or higher.
- Call the office if there is increasing pain, redness, swelling, and warmth or pus drainage at the incision.