

## Abdominoplasty/Panniculectomy

The following instructions will help you know what to expect in the days following your surgery. Do not, however, hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns.

### Activities

Your doctor may tell you to wear an abdominal binder after your surgery. If so, wear it night and day for the first 3 weeks. Remove the binder only to shower.

During the first few days after surgery, most patients find it more comfortable to sleep in a flexed position. Use pillows to keep your head and shoulders elevated, and place a pillow under your knees. If you are not comfortable sleeping in this position, you may sleep flat. It is more important to get a good night's rest.

Shower daily, starting two days after your surgery, to keep the incisions clean. If you still have drains, you may attach them to a belt or cloth strap to prevent them from pulling while you shower.

It is extremely important that you do not smoke or have any form of nicotine for a minimum of 2 weeks after surgery. Smoking interferes with healing and increase your risk of postoperative complications.

Continue to avoid Vitamin E and herbal medications for 1 week after surgery.

You may resume light activity such as walking and light lifting (up to 5 pounds) within the first few days after surgery. Check with your doctor before resuming any strenuous activity such as biking, swimming, aerobics, or weightlifting (usually three to six weeks). Also, when returning to more exercise, start slowly and gradually work up to your daily routine.

You may drive after you discontinue your narcotic pain medication and when you are comfortable with your mobility.

Prescription pain medication can cause constipation. You may take an over the counter stool softener (Colace) to help alleviate these symptoms.

### Wound Care

You will have drains to help reduce swelling. These drains will be removed when they are draining less than 30 cc per day. This might take 7 to 10 days or more. Call your doctor's office to schedule drain removal once the drainage is less than 30 cc in a 24-hour period.

Please change all dressings or bandages daily. Bandages are optional once incisions are comfortable. Use them only if you need to protect your clothing from drainage.

It is normal to experience swelling and bruising of the abdomen and groin for the first few weeks after surgery. Other normal experiences include:

- Tightness and discomfort of the abdominal muscles for several weeks

- Areas of numbness of the abdominal skin for up to six months

- A small amount of drainage during the first few days

- Redness of surgical scars for three to six months after surgery (This will then slowly fade.)

**Follow up**

Usually there are no sutures to remove. You will have a follow up appointment approximately 1 week after surgery.

Please call your doctor's office at the first sign of:

Excessive (severe) pain associated with pressure and enlargement of the abdomen

Redness, drainage, or odor from the incision(s) or drains

Fever or chills

Shortness of breath

It is best to avoid exposing the scar to the sun and to wear sun protection of at least SPF 30 for at least 6 months after surgery.

**Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns**

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