



BREAST RECONSTRUCTION POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS



HOW TO CONTACT US

Blake Hospital Clinic

M-F 8 am- 4:30 pm

941-567-2876

After Hours Answering Service

941-567-2876

WHAT TO EXPECT AT HOME

- It is normal to have pain, bruising, and swelling of the breast or incisions after you get home. Within a few days or weeks, these symptoms will go away. You may have a loss of sensation in your breast skin after surgery. Sensation may return over time.
- You may need help with your everyday activities for a few days until your pain and swelling decrease. Incision scars may take several months to over a year to fade.
- You will be prescribed pain medication and Eliquis. Eliquis is a medication that prevents blood clots. You may also be prescribed an antibiotic. Please take all medications as instructed.
- You will be seen in clinic within one week from the time of discharge.

ACTIVITY

- PLEASE limit your activity for the next 6 weeks. It is imperative that you DO NOT lift anything greater than 10 lbs. and that you DO NOT repetitively move your arms, especially above your shoulders.
- Try taking short walks as soon as possible to promote blood flow and healing.
- While you are healing, LIMIT your physical activities so that you DO NOT stretch your incisions. Please sleep and rest with your back propped on several pillows. You DO NOT want to lay flat and enhance swelling to the chest for several days. DO NOT lay on your side.
- DO NOT do any heavy lifting, strenuous exercise or overstretching your arms for 6 weeks.
- DO NOT drive if you are taking narcotic pain medicines. You should have full range of motion in your arms before you start driving again.
- Ask your provider when you can go back to work or start other activities.

SURGICAL SITE CARE

- Check daily for signs of infection (redness, pain, or drainage).
- You may have drains in place, please strip and record these drains as instructed by the nurse in recovery. It is essential that the output is recorded correctly and the amounts are shown to your surgeon at the time of your first

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follow up visit. The drains may remain in place for up to 2 weeks after surgery.

- At the site where the drain tube meets the skin, there will be a blue patch covered by a clear dressing called Tegaderm. It is essential that this clear dressing is strongly stuck to the skin and covers the drain entry site at all times. The patch and clear dressing will be changed at your first follow-up appointment.
- DO NOT shower while your drains are in place. You may sponge bathe to keep clean, but DO NOT get your incisions or drain sites wet.
- DO NOT take baths, soak in a hot tub, or go swimming until your surgeon says it is okay.

OTHER SELF-CARE

- Make sure you eat healthy foods, including lots of fruits and vegetables. Drink plenty of fluids. A healthy diet and plenty of fluids promote bowel movements and prevent infection.
- Your pain should go away over several weeks. Take any pain medicines as directed. Take them with food and plenty of water.
- DO NOT apply ice or heat to your breasts.
- DO NOT drink alcohol while you are taking pain medicines.
- DO NOT take aspirin or ibuprofen until 48-hours after surgery. After the first 48-hours, these medications are preferred to narcotic medications. Ask your surgeon which vitamins, supplements, and other medicines are safe to take.
- DO NOT smoke. Smoking slows healing and increases your risk of complications and infection.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

- Increasing pain, redness, swelling, yellow or green drainage, bleeding, or significant bruising at the incision site(s).
- Side effects from medicines, such as rash, nausea, vomiting, or headache.
- A fever of 100°F (38°C) or higher.
- If you notice sudden swelling of your breast.
- Numbness or loss of motion.

FOLLOW-UP

- You will be seen several days after your surgery in order to check the incisions. At that time, the drain output will be reviewed and the drains may possibly be removed. Please remember to bring your drain output records as the decision to remove the drains will be based on the output.
- If you were not given a follow-up appointment at the time of your operation, please call the clinic to arrange follow-up within one week from the time of your surgery.