

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING ABDOMINOPLASTY

1. Activity

- ❖ Minimal; increase as tolerated
- ❖ Use the incentive spirometer (breathing machine) 10X every half hour
- ❖ **DO NOT** strain abdominal muscles, to get out of bed, roll.
- ❖ **NO HEAVY** lifting (10lbs or more) for 4-6 weeks.
- ❖ No driving for 2 weeks, depending on amount of discomfort.

2. Medication

- ❖ Please take as directed
- ❖ You will be on an antibiotic for 5 days.
- ❖ Once you are feeling less surgical pain, you may want to take your prescription pain medication at night and an over the counter pain medication during the day. (Tylenol, Aspirin, or Ibuprofen)

3. Wound Care

- ❖ You will have drains in place. You may have some drainage from the drain sites and/or around the drains. Keep these areas covered with gauze sponges.
- ❖ If drainage is noted from around the drain site, **please make sure that the suction bulb is compressed.** Empty the drain three times per day. Keep a record of the amount of drainage on the form provided to you. Please bring this record to the clinic when you have your postoperative check.
- ❖ Dr. Gerzenshtein will remove the drains in the office when the drainage is appropriate.
- ❖ You may shower 48 hours after the procedure. **DO NOT** bathe or submerge in water.
- ❖ Pat abdominal incision area dry, **DO NOT** rub.
- ❖ You may have drainage from the drain site for 24 hours after the drains are removed.
- ❖ Wear the abdominal binder continuously.

- ❖ When reapplying the binder keep it firm but not tight to where you have to exert effort to close it.
- ❖ You may remove it to bathe and to rinse out the binder. Please rinse by hand and air dry to prevent shrinkage.
- ❖ Swelling, bruising, tenderness and redness are normal. **EXCESSIVE** redness is not normal and should be reported to your doctor.
- ❖ Good nutrition is important for wound healing.

4. **Call Your Doctor If You Have**

- ❖ Pus-like or foul smelling drainage
- ❖ Temperature greater than 100 degrees
- ❖ Excessive bleeding or drainage
- ❖ Increased pain that is intolerable
- ❖ Dr Gerzenshtein: 608-728-3896

More Information:

Abdominoplasty is an operation done at the hospital. You should arrive two hours prior to your scheduled time. Dr. Gerzenshtein will meet you in the prep and holding area prior to going into the operating room to go over the plan and place marks for surgery. When the operation is complete you will go to the recovery room for about an hour. Friends or family may see you after you leave the recovery room. You will have one or two drains placed at the time of surgery to help remove fluid that collects under the skin. Typically they stay in for 1-2 weeks. Dr. Gerzenshtein or the nursing staff will explain how they work prior to discharge. They should be emptied 3 times per day, or when full. You should record the amount of drainage in milliliters and write it in the table provided each time you empty the suction bulb. The mls are written on the side of the suction bulb. The drains are ready to come out in the office when they are putting out less than 25mls total for 1-2 days. This is easily done and not considered painful.

An abdominal binder is put on at the time of surgery. It should be snug but not too tight. It should be comfortable to wear. If it is not you may loosen or reposition it. Most patients wear the binder continuously for about two weeks. It is okay to remove it and wash it as needed.

You should sleep on your back with your waist slightly flexed until you feel that you can lie flat without much tension. This usually takes 1-2 weeks. Placing 2 pillows under your knees while reclined will help considerably.

It is okay to change your dressings as needed to keep clean and dry. Maxi pads work well for this instead of less absorbent but expensive surgical gauze. On the skin are Steri-strips. They should be left on the skin. They stay on for two to three weeks and are removed in the office. If you develop blisters along the incision apply an antibiotic ointment like Neosporin until they are healed.

Daily activity is encouraged but it should not be strenuous initially. It is important to be up and about to keep blood circulating in your legs. Lifting should be no more than ten pounds for several weeks. Driving is okay when you are not taking pain killers and can react quickly if necessary. Usually this is in about one to two weeks.

Return to work is variable and depends on the type of job. Two to three weeks is the norm.

Scar quality depends on many things such as skin type, age, tension etc. Topical silicone products like Scar Guard are recommended to help improve their appearance. These are begun when you are fully healed and the steri-strips are off. Occasionally laser or small in office touch ups are done to the scar typically 3-4 months after surgery.