

Post-Operative Instructions for Abdominoplasty

Perioperative Services



Queensway Carleton
Hospital

HOSPITAL STAY:

Some patients stay overnight and have a urinary catheter in place. If you do stay overnight, you will be discharged early the next morning after your catheter has been removed by the Nurse.

PAIN:

Some pain is normal after surgery. Your Doctor will prescribe pain pills for you. Take as instructed. For mild to moderate discomfort you may wish to take Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen. If you have worsening pain not controlled by your medication, contact your Surgeon for instructions.

OPERATIVE SITE:

Garment

You will be provided with an Abdominal Garment to hold your dressings and provide support after your surgery. Wear it as directed by your Surgeon. It should be tight enough to provide support. It should not restrict your breathing.

Drains

- Drains may have been placed in the abdominal area to prevent fluid from collecting under the skin.
- Fluid will range in colour red to pink then yellow.
- Your Nurse will teach you how to empty the drains and record the volume.
- The drains will be removed when daily total volume is less than ____cc for two consecutive days (usually between 5 – 10 days after your surgery).
- After your drains are removed, you may notice pink/yellow fluid leaking from the drain holes or incisions. Contact your Surgeon's office if this does not slow after 2 more days.

Incision

- Keep your incision dry and covered until your first post-op visit.
- You may change the outer gauze if it gets soiled (sanitary napkins are good for this).
- Keep the steri strip tapes over the incision site intact.
- Replace the garment.
- You may sponge bath at any time but keep the incisions and drain sites dry.

After the drains are removed and daily thereafter;

- Remove the outer padding and gauze (yellow or red drainage on the dressing is normal).
- Shower normally, then pat the incision dry. Apply Polysporin™ to any scabbed areas.

- If there is drainage cover your incision with gauze or a sanitary napkin. Put your post-op garment back on.
- Your sutures will dissolve on their own.
- Swelling and bruising will peak in 2 – 3 days, reducing significantly over the first 2 weeks. Your skin will be slightly tight during this time.
- Your abdominal skin will settle and soften over 3 months.
- Your incision will fade and soften over the next 18 months.

ACTIVITY:

- Get plenty of rest but take your meals at the table, walk to the bathroom etc.
- In the days that follow, go for frequent short walks around the house.
- Do not stand fully straight until instructed to do so.
- Do not exercise your abdomen or trunk or go jogging for 6 weeks.

Back to work

2 - 4 weeks depending on your occupation and type of physical exertion required.

Driving

You must be pain free and off all pain medication before you start driving. Take a licensed adult with you for your first short trip.

FOLLOW UP:

Your Doctor will advise you when to follow up in the office.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- Do not swim in lakes, pools or use hot tubs for at least 2 weeks, and only after incision has healed.
- You will start your SkinMedica Scar Recovery Gel™ after your follow up visit.

Contact your Surgeon or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:

- Any signs of infection such as:
 - Chills and high fever, 38°C or 100.4° F or higher for greater than 24 hours.
 - The wound is hot, swollen and not healing and redness that spreads beyond the incision.
 - Pus-like drainage from the incision, grey, yellow or green.
 - New pain, getting worse after 3 - 4 days.
- Pain in your calves.
- Pain with breathing and/or shortness of breath.
- Inability to pass gas, uncontrolled nausea and vomiting.

