



Post-Operative and Home Care Instructions for Abdominoplasty Surgery

DIET: Start with clear liquids and toast or crackers. If those are well tolerated, progress to a regular diet.

DRIVING: No driving for 1 to 2 weeks after your procedure or while taking pain medicine.

ACTIVITY: You may walk and climb stairs immediately after surgery. It is recommended that you walk in a stooped or flexed position as discussed with the physician. After 4 weeks you may resume light activity such as brisk walking. During the first 4 weeks do not lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk. After 6 weeks you may resume more strenuous aerobic work and lifting activities as discussed with your physician.

WORK: Depending on your career and your rate of healing you should be able to return to work within 2 to 3 weeks of surgery. Your surgeon will be able to give you a better estimate depending on your physical and professional profile.

WOUND CARE: A compression garment will be placed during surgery and should remain in place 24 hours a day for the first 30 days. This garment can be unzipped on one side the evening of surgery and as needed during the first 2-3 days to allow the skin to "breathe" and to provide comfort. After 3 weeks, many patients will only need to wear their garment during the daytime hours, though many patients prefer to continue wearing the garment around the clock. If your garment is causing significant discomfort be sure to contact your physician.

SWELLING: Mild to moderate swelling and bruising should be expected during the first several weeks. Some swelling and fluid retention can persist for several months. Remember everyone heals at a different rate, and your surgeon will follow your progress closely. Do not use a heating pad on abdomen.

BATHING: You may shower 48 hours after surgery, but someone must be present with you to ensure that you are stable and do not become "light-headed". When you shower do not allow water to run or spray to hit directly over the incision site. Do not submerge the incision in a bath or swimming pool for 4 to 6 weeks.

MEDICATIONS: Ask your surgeon when you can resume your blood thinning medications. All other prescription medications may be resumed the day following surgery as long as you are tolerating fluids/solids. While you are taking pain medicine, you are encouraged to follow a high fiber diet and take a stool softener such as Colace (available over the counter), as pain medications tend to cause constipation

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL: Absolutely no smoking or second hand smoke during the first 4 weeks after surgery as it impedes wound healing and can lead to serious wound complications. Alcohol consumption is dangerous while taking pain medicine and it has a tendency to worsen bleeding.

POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT: Your first follow-up visit will be 1 week after surgery. Your surgeon will then schedule visits at appropriate intervals to monitor your progress.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Call your surgeon immediately if you experience any of the following: pain not relieved by pain medicine, bleeding, redness at the incision site, or fever over 101°F.