



## Post-Operative and Home Care Instructions for Nipple Reconstruction Surgery

**DIET:** Start with clear liquids and toast or crackers. If those are well tolerated, progress to a regular diet. If your procedure did not require general anesthesia ("going to sleep"), you may immediately resume a regular diet.

**DRIVING:** No driving while taking prescription pain medicine.

**ACTIVITY:** You may walk and climb stairs immediately following surgery. After 2 weeks you may resume moderate activity such as brisk walking. After 4-6 weeks you may resume more strenuous aerobic work and lifting activities.

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

**WOUND CARE:** Your surgeon will take down your dressing at your 1 week appt. Your dressing may get wet in the shower. Try to direct the shower to your back, but it is fine if the dressing gets wet. Pat dry after your shower. At your first follow-up visit, your surgeon will review special instructions to care for your nipples. Avoid putting pressure directly on reconstructed nipples, including tight bras and tight shirts.

**BATHING:** You may shower and wash your hair 48 hours after surgery. Shower only for the first 30 days post-operative. Try to keep the shower directed at your back and not at your incision or dressing. It is okay if the dressing gets wet in the shower. Pat it dry after your shower. For the first 4-6 weeks after surgery, do not submerge in a bathtub, pool, or hot tub.

**MEDICATIONS:** Ask your surgeon when you may resume your blood thinning medications. All other prescription medications may be resumed immediately, as usual. While you are taking prescription pain medicine, you are encouraged to follow a high fiber diet or take a stool softener such as Colace (available over the counter), as pain medications tend to cause constipation. If you are prescribed antibiotics by your surgeon please take your full course unless otherwise advised by your physician.

**SMOKING AND ALCOHOL:** Do not smoke for the first several weeks after surgery as it impedes wound healing and can lead to serious wound complications. Alcohol consumption is dangerous while taking pain medicine. 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 see you at appropriate intervals after this to monitor your progress.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:** Call your surgeon immediately if you experience any of the following: excessive pain, swelling, bleeding, redness at the incision site, or fever over 101° F.

**GARMENT:** Do not wear a compressive bra for the first 3 weeks. You may wear a light camisole for gentle support.

Call 911 if you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency. Such symptoms include severe shortage of breath, chest palpitations, sudden or severe chest pain, or other life-threatening concerns.

