

Mastopexy (Breast Lift) Post Operative Instructions

- **DRESSINGS:** Gauze pads or fluffs will cover the incision lines. Because the incision lines are usually quite long, some oozing of blood may occur (this is normal). Feel free to reinforce the dressings as needed at home.
- **BLEEDING:** Small amounts of oozing and bleeding are very common. If this entails more than slow staining of the gauze, apply firm pressure for 20-30 minutes before calling the office immediately at (360) 479-4370.
- **WEARING YOUR BRA:** A bra may be placed at the time of surgery or a day or two after. The bra acts as a "dressing," holding the breasts in perfect position. If the bra feels too tight or hurts, switch immediately to any bra that feels comfortable. A bra that is too tight can cause ulceration of the skin, and you must not let this happen! We want you to wear the bra at all times for at least 4-6 weeks. After 4-6 weeks, if you are healing without difficulty, you may sleep without the bra. You should not go braless during the day for 6 weeks after surgery. You will probably be more comfortable if you do not wear an underwire bra.
- **SHOWERING AND BATHING:** Water does not hurt healing incisions. You may shower once the gauze dressings are removed. You may leave the adhesive strips (steri-strips) in place if they are adherent. If they become too loose, remove them.
- **DRIVING:** You may drive when driving does not cause pain. This usually occurs in 2-3 days if you have a car with power steering.
- **EXERCISE:** You may take gentle walks within a few days. Do not return to aerobic exercise for 4 weeks.

LONGER TERM POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS*

- **ACTIVITY/SPORTS:** We want you to avoid straining or any aerobic activity for at least 4 weeks after surgery. This is to avoid bleeding, bruising, and swelling. Do not resume strenuous exercise for 4 weeks. Dr. Meeks will give you clearance to increase your activities according to the progress of your activity.
- **DRIVING:** You may resume driving when you feel you are able, but wait at least 2 days after surgery. Keep in mind that you must have full use of your reflexes. If pain will inhibit them, don't drive! IF YOU ARE TAKING NARCOTIC PAIN MEDICATIONS DO NOT DRIVE.
- **SEXUAL ACTIVITY:** You may enjoy sexual activity as your body allows with following restriction: please reread Activity/Sports above and apply the same concept to sex.
- **SUN EXPOSURE:** If fresh scars are exposed to the sun, they will tend to become darker and take longer to fade. Sunscreen can help. Take extra care and precautions if the area operated on is slightly numb -- you might not "feel" sunburn developing.
- **WORK:** Follow whatever plan you and Dr. Meeks have agreed upon.

SPECIFIC AS YOU HEAL INSTRUCTIONS

- **POSTOPERATIVE SAGGING:** The breast skin and tissue will continue to sag with time. No "lift" is forever. If and when the sagging occurs, a small skin excision or tightening will usually solve the problem. Also, it is quite common for the two breasts to heal differently. One may swell more, one may feel more uncomfortable or their shapes may differ initially. After complete healing, they will look remarkably similar and natural. You must be patient, but if you are concerned, ask questions of Dr. Meeks or the nursing staff.

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- **HEALING OF SENSORY NERVES:** Tingling, burning, or shooting pains accompany regeneration of the sensory nerves. The pains will disappear with time and are nothing to be alarmed about.
- **ACTIVITIES:** If your work keeps you sedentary, you may return whenever you feel up to it. If your work is strenuous, wait until your work activity does not cause any superficial pain. Do not begin aerobic or strenuous exercise for 4 weeks. Let your body tell you what it can tolerate.