

# Post-Operative Instructions

## Breast Reduction

Following your surgery, it is important that you follow Dr. Shaddix's post-operative instructions. If you have any questions regarding these instructions or any other aspect of your care, please call our office at (850) 476-7100.

### *General*

- You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home after surgery and to help you care for yourself for the first 24-48 hours after your procedure.
- It is important to relax after surgery. You will have less energy than usual for the first few days and should not try to go back to your normal activities right away. Your body needs rest to heal.
- Depending on your job, you should be able to return to work in about 1 week with duty restrictions. Some patients return to work sooner while others need a little extra time to recover.
- If you take regular medications, ask Dr. Shaddix when it is safe to resume taking them.
- If drains are placed, you will be given separate instructions on how to empty them and record their output.

### *Medications*

- For the first ten days after surgery, do not take aspirin or other NSAIDs (Bufferin, Anacin, Excedrin, Aleve, Ibuprofen, Motrin, etc.).
- Please remember that the pain medication prescribed by Dr. Shaddix contains Tylenol. It is NOT safe to take regular Tylenol at the same time you are taking the pain medication.
- When taking the prescription pain medication, you should not drink alcohol or drive a car.
- The pain medication may make you drowsy or give you an upset stomach. If this is the case, ask Dr. Shaddix about alternative medications.
- You will be prescribed an anti-nausea medication for any nausea that may be caused by the lingering effects of anesthesia over the first few days after surgery.
- Take your antibiotics until they are all gone.
- You will have a prescription for a muscle relaxant as well. This may be helpful to take if you are having muscle cramping in your back, chest, neck, or shoulders following surgery.
- After surgery, especially while taking pain medications, you may become constipated. It is a good idea to have an over-the-counter stool softener on hand in case this becomes an issue.

### *Activity*

- You should be walking around the evening of surgery and frequently thereafter to help prevent a blood clot from forming in your legs. However, you should not be doing much more than walking and climbing stairs. No heavy lifting (anything greater than 20 pounds) or strenuous activities such as sports are allowed until 2-4 weeks after surgery.
- Move and pump your legs and feet frequently when sitting or lying down.



- Wait about 2 weeks after surgery before having sex or doing anything to raise your blood pressure substantially. Do not allow your partner to touch your breasts for 3 weeks after surgery.

#### *Diet*

- The anesthesia you are given may make you nauseated during the first day after surgery. Therefore, it is wise to drink liquids and eat only mild foods during this time (jello, mashed potatoes, soups). When you feel like it, you may resume your regular diet.
- Increase your fluid intake in the first couple weeks after surgery. During this time, also avoid excess alcohol consumption as this can make you dehydrated.

#### *Incision Care*

- You will be wrapped with an ACE bandage in the operating room. On the day following surgery, you may continue to wear the wrap or you may switch to your own supportive bra. It is important to choose one without underwire. Inexpensive sports bras are available at Target and Wal-Mart and will work very well. You may wish to purchase a couple to allow for one to be worn while the other is being laundered. Avoid sports bras that give too much compression.
- You should continue to wear your supportive bra around the clock for at least 3 weeks after surgery at which point Dr. Shaddix will likely clear you to begin wearing bras of your choosing.
- Immediately after surgery, there will be gauze placed over the incisions. You may remove this after 1 day and do not need to replace it
- Dr. Shaddix typically places steri-strips over your larger incisions. These are tightly adherent to your skin. They serve to protect the incisions as they are healing. If these begin to peel off, you may gently clip any peeled up edges with a small pair of scissors.
- It is safe to remove your wrap and shower or sponge-bathe on the second day following surgery. Allow the steri-strips to get wet with soap and water. Afterwards, pat the steri-strips dry and put the bra back on. Do not take a regular bath or soak your incisions.
- Occasionally, some absorbable sutures might poke through the skin. This is not a cause for alarm. If this happens, please call our office so we can trim them.

#### *Things to Avoid*

- Do not smoke or allow yourself to be exposed to second-hand smoke.
- Do not stay in bed all day. Walk frequently.
- Do not swim in a pool/lake/river/ocean for 4 weeks following surgery.
- Sauna and steam baths should be avoided for 6 weeks following surgery.
- Do not tan your scars for the first year following surgery because they may tan darker than the surrounding skin. This darkness, if allowed to occur, may be permanent. In general it is safe to begin using sunscreen on your incisions 3 weeks after surgery. You should cover your incisions with sunscreen during the first year after surgery. Tanning beds should be avoided.



*Things to Look For*

- If you develop a fever of 101°F or greater, increasing pain, redness around the incisions, or concerning drainage from the incisions, call Dr. Shaddix immediately on his cell phone number that will be provided to you on the day of surgery.

*Things to Expect*

- Scars may become reddened before they fade. This is normal.
- Your pain will be at its peak on postoperative days 2 and 3. It should improve after that.
- Expect some discoloration and bruising. This is normal and will usually resolve within 3 weeks.
- Expect some numbness of the breast skin that will subside over the first couple of months.
- Final results may not be apparent for 6 months.

*Follow-up*

- Dr. Shaddix would like to see you in clinic 1 week after surgery. This appointment is typically prescheduled, please reach out to our office if you are unsure about the date and time.
- Dr. Shaddix would like to see you again 3 weeks after surgery and then again at 3 months.
- Please remember that we are here for you to answer any and all questions, no matter how small! If you have a question, it is likely that we have the answer.

