

PREPARING FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION w/SKIN EXPANDER PLACEMENT

What to expect - you can expect bruising and swelling for several weeks. You will also be required to visit your surgeon's office frequently to have sterile fluid placed in the expander through a valve.

6 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

Your surgeon may request you abstain from smoking and all tobacco products 6 weeks before and 6 weeks afterward. Failure to abstain may result in post-surgical complications as this hinders the healing process.

2 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

Medications - Discontinue Aspirin and Aspirin-like products, Ibuprofen (Motrin), Naprosyn (Aleve), Vitamin E tablets and certain herbs like Ginko Bilolba, St. John's Wort, Ephedra 2 weeks before surgery. If you have concerns about other herbs or vitamin restrictions, please phone our office. You may take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) at any time.

Pre-admissions appointment - must occur before surgery, unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.

BEFORE SURGERY

Diet - Do not eat or drink after midnight the evening before surgery, unless otherwise directed by the anesthesiologist.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

FIRST 24-48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY

- Your greatest discomfort will occur the first 24-48 hours following surgery. During this time, take all medication as prescribed. It is helpful to take pain medication with crackers or toast to avoid nausea which may occur if taken on an empty stomach. Also, if you are given additional prescriptive medication by your surgeon, please take as directed.

MEDICATION

- Take all medication as prescribed. Avoid Aspirin and Aspirin products for 2 weeks after surgery. Tylenol (Acetaminophen) can be taken. Please limit Acetaminophen use to 4gm (4000 mg) in a 24 hour period.

DIET

- Eat and drink easily digested foods such as Jell-O, ginger ale soups, etc. These are tolerated well the first 24 hours after surgery. If you are not nauseous you may resume your normal diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat fruit and high fiber foods to avoid constipation.

HYGIENE

- You may shower and wash your hair 24 hours after surgery. Pat incisions dry. No baths please.

ACTIVITY

- No lifting over 10 lb. until cleared by the doctor.
- No driving for 1-2 weeks until cleared by the doctor and you have not taken prescriptive pain medication for 24 hours.
- When at home, take frequent rest periods - you may walk for short distances. Some walking is important to prevent clots from forming in your legs. Use comfort as your guide. If it hurts, don't do it.
- No heavy household chores.
- Check with your doctor before resuming jogging, aerobics, sexual activity or vigorous exercise.
- Avoid sunbathing for 2-4 weeks until cleared by the doctor.
- No smoking for 6 weeks as smoking retards the healing process.

WOUND CARE

- Your dressing consists of Steri-strips (small tapes over the incisions), a strip of yellow gauze (optional), and a white gauze pad. An Ace wrap may also be placed for protection and support.
- Keep the dressings dry and intact until your first post surgery visit.
- When you bath, remove the outer gauze dressing. Do not remove the Steri-strips placed over the stitches. The Steri-strips are fairly water resistant and usually stay in place until you return to the office. However, if they fall off on their own just keep the area protected.

NOTIFY YOUR DOCTOR IF

- You have a fever of 101 degrees or more which lasts for 24 hours or longer.
- You develop any excessive swelling, redness or warmth of incisions.
- You experience severe pain not responding to prescribed pain medication.
- You develop thick, odorous drainage or bleeding that doesn't subside. You have any shortness of breath.

