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Liposuction Post Operative Instructions

Dressings

You may have tapes across your incision. If this is the case please leave them in place for one week at which point you can remove them. If they fall off please just apply a thin layer of Vaseline to the incision 3 times/day up to 2 weeks post excision. If you do not have tapes please apply Vaseline to the incision 3 times/day.

Drains

You may or may not have drains in place. These are small rubber grenades attached to plastic tubes. These should be emptied every 8 hours (or as needed for the first 2-3 days) and the volume recorded. You then squeeze the grenade and replace the stopper to recharge it. Fluid coming out of the drain can be bloody for 2-3 days however should start to get more straw-like in color. It is not abnormal for it to remain blood tinged for the entire week. These are usually removed at your first follow up appointment.

Showering

It is okay to shower 72 hours after your surgery right over the tapes or the incision if you do not have drains. Just pat it dry after the shower. Please do not submerge the incision for one week for instance in the bath. If you have drains please wait until after your one week follow up and drain removal to shower.

Pain

Please take Tylenol extra-strength and your prescribed medication, if you have been given one, starting 2 hours after surgery and regularly over the next 36 hours even if you do not have any pain. Once pain starts if it is very difficult to stop.

Sutures

Your sutures are dissolving and do not need to be removed. They usually dissolve within 3-4 weeks.

If you were informed that your sutures are none dissolving, we will need to see you in one week for removal unless you have been instructed otherwise.

Activity

It is important to be getting up and moving right from the time of discharge. This means getting up to go to the bathroom, getting your own glass or water, walking to the kitchen table. This is to reduce the risk of blood clots.

Otherwise please refrain from exercise and heavy physical activity for 4 weeks. Ideally stay in your compression garment 24/7 when not showering for the first 4 weeks and just at night for another 2 weeks.

What to watch out for

Some redness around the incision as it heals is normal. This is due to increased blood flow.

If pain is increasing after 3-4 days associated with redness and swelling that is not improving over 10-12 hours these are signs of an infection. You should call the office, your family practitioner or present to emergency if the first two options are unavailable.

Sudden onset of shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or chest pain should prompt an immediate call to the office if this is during working hours. If after hours please head to the emergency department. These can be signs of a DVT/Pulmonary embolus that can be life threatening.

Scar management

Starting 3 weeks after surgery (once your incision is completely healed) its time to start massaging the scar. Do this 3-4 times a day for 1-2 minutes with firm pressure. A drop of lotion may help.

Topicals for minimizing scaring and improving color/texture are available through the office and should be started at 3 weeks. Ask Dr. Chambers or one of his staff to help you with choosing what's right for you.

Your final results will take 3-6 months. Swelling, bruising and tenderness are common and tend to worsen over the first 36-72 hours then gradually improve.