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### **TOP Surgery Post Operative Instructions**



#### **Dressings**

Dr. Chambers will put dressings on you the day of surgery. These should stay in place until your first follow up appointment at one week. If there is any overflow leakage please reinforce with dry gauze or a feminine hygiene pad. Please keep your post operative compression garment on at all times.

You will continue to wear your compression garment for 4 weeks after surgery. After the first 2 weeks it is okay to undo this for short periods of time while at rest (watching TV, reading a book) but otherwise it should be snug at all times.

If you have had nipple grafts the dressings for these will be changed after one week. After your first appointment you can shower and allow water to run over the grafts. Please do not rub or scrub the grafts or incisions until 4 weeks. After your shower apply a thin layer of vasaline and a dry bandage to avoid friction with the compression garment. Nipple grafts usually take anywhere from 4-7 weeks to heal completely. This is totally normal.

All tapes should be removed at 12 days post operatively.

#### **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.

#### **Pain**

You will be provided with a prescription for pain medication. Ideally this should be started right after leaving the hospital, before any pain starts. Take the medication regularly over the 1<sup>st</sup> 24 hours even if you are not having any discomfort, then switch to take as needed. Start taking extra strength Tylenol and Advil immediately as well. Please do not take aspirin or herbal medications for this first week. You should not drive while taking prescribed pain medication.

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Pain medication can cause constipation. It is recommended that you pick up a stool softener such as Colace with your prescription to avoid straining bowel movements.

If you experience rapid swelling on one side with or without pain please call the office or go to emergency if this is over the weekend or after hours. This may be a hematoma or blood collection that requires drainage. If you are having more pain at 72 hours than previously, which is not resolving, please contact the office. If one or both breasts become red, hot and painful please call the office or go to emergency. These are signs of an infection.

### **Activity**

It is important to start moving right away. This includes trips to the bathroom and kitchen. Please avoid lifting over 5 lbs for the first 2 weeks and nothing over 10lbs until 4 weeks after surgery. Please avoid vigorous exercise for the first 4 weeks after surgery.

You can shower after your first appointment. Pat all incisions and dressings dry after and redress them as needed.

### **What to Expect after Surgery**

You can be tired after a general anesthetic for up to a week. Low grade fever and nausea are not uncommon up to 24 hours. For this reason it is recommended that you advance your diet gradually. After the first day it is okay to eat what ever you want. We recommend increasing your protein intake over the first 2 weeks.

You may have some decreased sensation in the skin of your breasts due to stretching/cutting of the nerves. This will improve however please avoid hot water bottles or icing for >20 minutes as you may burn yourself.

There can be some differential swelling of the chest tissue. This will settle with time. Similarly, the incision will look raised, red and lumpy for the first 4-6 weeks. This is totally normal and will improve with time. We will discuss scar management at your 4 week follow up appointment.