



THE NADERI CENTER

COSMETIC SURGERY SPECIALISTS

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION SURGERY

3-4 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

- *Obtain Medical Evaluation and Clearance.* Make a visit to your primary care doctor to complete your medical evaluation and laboratory testing. Please ensure any preoperative requests are completed 2 weeks before surgery.
- *Work and Recovery Arrangements.* Make any arrangements to be off from work or other strenuous activities while you are recovering from surgery. Have extra help available, particularly if caring for small children.
- *Smoking.* Tobacco, cigarettes and nicotine consumption will cause poor wound healing, longer healing times, and excessive scarring. We advise to discontinuing these products more than 4 weeks prior to surgery.

2 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

- *Surgery Preop Appointment.* You will come in for your preop appointment where you will review the surgery plan with your surgeon and go over logistical surgery details with your patient coordinator. Bring your questions as well as any individuals that will be part of your support and healing.
- *DIET/SUPPLEMENT RESTRICTIONS.* Avoid foods, drinks and herbal supplements that can increase risk of bleeding and bruising. Avoid aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Motrin, blood thinners, vitamin E, omega-3, fish oil, and alcohol. Use Tylenol in place of other over the counter pain medications.
- *Fill Prescriptions if provided preoperatively.* These may include antibiotics and/or pain medication for after surgery. Make sure you understand how and when to take all medications. We suggest keeping a note pad to keep track of the medications you have taken.
- *Watch the PREOP AND POST OP VIDEOS on our website:*
www.nadericenter.com

1 WEEK BEFORE SURGERY

- *Review Instructions with Caregiver.* Confirm who will be driving you to and from the surgical center and who will stay with you for at least 24 hours after surgery.

NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY

- **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT OR SURGERY WILL BE CANCELED.** If prescribed, take medications with a small sip of water.
- *Set Up Home Recovery Area.* This may include pillows, blankets, books, television, and anything else to assist with a comfortable recovery.
- *Bathing.* You can shower but do not apply lotion, perfume, hair product, etc.
- *Relax.* Stay calm and get plenty of rest to avoid unnecessary stress.

DAY OF SURGERY

- *Dress Comfortably.* Dress in comfortable, clean, and loose-fitting clothes. Shirts that can be buttoned or zipped up are preferred.
- *Arrival to Facility.* Arrive to the assigned facility of your procedure at the time stated in your pre-operative packet. Remember to bring a form of identification.
- Do NOT wear any makeup, jewelry, cosmetic creams, hair products, deodorant, sunscreen, and remove all piercings.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION SURGERY

NIGHT OF SURGERY

- *Movement is Important.* Make sure to get out of bed and be up and walking around immediately after your surgery. When lying down in bed or on the couch, make sure you are moving your legs and ankles. Take deep breaths frequently to keep your lungs clear.
- *Sleep.* Sleep on your back with your head elevated about 30-40 degrees (2-3 pillows). Do not sleep on your side. Keeping your body more upright will minimize swelling. Continue this for at least two weeks.

MEDICATIONS

- *Pain.* You will be prescribed a pain medication for post-operative pain control. If your discomfort after surgery is not strong you are welcomed to take Tylenol in place of the prescribed medication. Do not take the Tylenol with the pain medication, as most often the medication you are prescribed will have Tylenol in it. **Do not exceed 4,000 mg of Tylenol in any 24-hour time period.** Take medication with food to minimize risk of nausea.
- *Nausea.* If you are experiencing nausea, which is common after general anesthesia as well as a known side effect of some stronger pain medications, we advise that you take your nausea medication.

- *Constipation.* You will experience constipation if taking narcotic pain relievers. Miralax or other over the counter laxatives are recommended to be taken twice a day. Do not wait to take until you are constipated. Begin treatment with narcotic use. If you need extra help, use Milk of Magnesia according to the directions on the package.
- *Medications to Avoid.* Take only those medications approved or prescribed by your surgeon. Avoid medications containing aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, others) for two weeks before and after surgery. These medications may increase bleeding.
- *Substances to Avoid.* Avoid alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine, for these will slow the healing process.

NUTRITION

- *Diet.* A light low-fat diet is best after surgery. You may start a regular diet after your surgery as long as you are not feeling nauseated or vomiting.
- *Hydration.* Stay hydrated by drinking 8 -10 glasses of water a day. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours and while you are still having to take pain medications.

ACTIVITY

- *Exercise.* Light physical activity may be resumed 2-3 weeks after surgery. Remember to start easy and build back up to your previous exercise levels. At 6-8 weeks or when further instructed by your surgeon, more intense exercise can be started. Just know that swelling may transiently be worse with exercise.
- *Arm Movement.* Limit your arm use to daily activities such as brushing your teeth, eating, and combing/shampooing your hair. Avoid strenuous activity and do not lift more than 10 lbs. for the first 2 weeks. Do not reach above your head for the first week. Perform gentle arm exercises daily starting one week after surgery.
- *Compression Bra.* You may be given a compression garment to wear the entire first week, and then as advised by your surgeon. The garment should fit snug but not too tight that you have trouble breathing or you develop wounds or blisters from the compression. Wear your garment at all times except for when you are showering or to wash it. This will help with minimizing swelling and help with recovery.
- *Driving.* No driving for 7 days after surgery. Do NOT operate a vehicle or make important decisions until you have been off pain medications for 24 hours. Use good judgment.
- *Return to work.* Most patients require approximately 5-7days off work depending on their job responsibilities. Returning to work with a light schedule initially or even part-time can be beneficial as well.

- *Sexual Intercourse.* Sexual activity can be resumed when you feel ready with no restrictions and incisions have adequately healed.

BATHING

- *Showering.* You may shower after removing the dressing, 48-72 hours after surgery. Using your hands, you can use soap and water to wash around your incisions. Pat the area dry with a towel. You do not need to re-cover the wound, unless you feel more comfortable with a light dressing for a few days to absorb minimal drainage that may occur.
- *Hot Tubs/Baths/Swimming Pools.* No tub baths, Jacuzzi, or hot tubs until your incisions have healed, and approved by your surgeon, around 4 weeks.

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR INCISIONS

- *Dressings.* Keep your dressings in place until follow-up appointment.
- *Drains.* Empty the bulbs attached to the drain every 12 hours and measure the fluid output separately from each drain. Keep a record of the output and bring this record with you each time you come to the office for post-operative care. Watch our drain management video at www.nadericenter.com.
- *Sun Exposure.* Avoid and minimize sun exposure. Use an SPF of 30 or greater when outdoors. Even a mild sunburn can worsen swelling and irritate an incision that is healing.
- *Scar ointment.* Scars may take up to a year to fully heal. After your incisions have completely healed and when your doctor has told you it is safe, you can begin to use silicon based ointment on your scars to improve healing.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- *Bruising.* You can expect to have bruising. Most bruises will heal after about 2-3 weeks. The bruise will go from a purplish color to a yellow/green shade as it starts to resolve.
- *Swelling.* Swelling is to be expected for weeks and sometimes months. The swelling can improve with intermittent rest and compression garments. Exercise and physical activity can transiently worsen swelling but is encouraged.
- *Itching.* Itching at the incision sites is normal for a few days. You may take Benadryl to help with this.
- *Discolored Urine.* If you had a sentinel lymph node biopsy with your mastectomy, your urine may have a greenish discoloration. This is normal and will resolve as the blue dye slowly leaves your body.

- *Pain.* It is normal to experience tightness, pressure, soreness, itchiness, and fatigue for several days to weeks following surgery as your skin and muscles heal. You may find that short naps will help with fatigue.
- *Implant Position.* If implants were used for your reconstruction, they may appear higher in position, firm, and uneven due to swelling during the healing process. After 3-6 months the implants should show a more final result with significantly reduced swelling.

DO NOT'S

- Do NOT apply hydrogen peroxide to incision sites. Keep postop dressings in place until follow-up.
- DO NOT soak in baths, Jacuzzis or hot tubs until all incisions have fully healed.
- DO NOT take Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen or other blood thinners until your surgeon advises you it is safe.
- Do NOT apply heating pads or ice packs to the treated areas unless otherwise instructed by your surgeon.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS – WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE (703) 481-0002 OR GO TO THE HOSPITAL

- *Signs of Infection.* Spreading redness, worsening swelling, increased drainage or drainage of pus, worsening pain and warmth at incision site. Temperature over 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- *Clogged Drains.* If you notice significant leakage around the drains, this is not normal and the drains may be clogged. Your drains will need to be checked.
- *Excessive Bleeding.* If the dressings are saturated with bright red blood and you are having to make very frequent dressing changes.
- *Other Emergency Situations.* Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chest pain, lightheadedness that does not quickly resolve, severe vomiting, pain or asymmetric swelling in your legs.

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| SHOPPING LIST |
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1. Prescriptions. Fill prescriptions prior to your surgery date if given.
2. Tylenol (Acetaminophen). Alternative to narcotic pain medication if pain is not severe. Do NOT take NSAIDS.
3. Laxative (Miralax, Colace, Milk and Magnesia). Helps with constipation that may be caused by anesthesia or narcotic pain medications.