

# SUBMENTAL LIPOSUCTION

## Pre-operative and Post-Operative Patient Instructions

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### PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMENTAL LIPOSUCTION

#### SHOPPING LIST

☐ **Prescriptions**

*Submitted to your pharmacy. Your pharmacy should contact you when ready to pick up.*

☐ **Stool Softener (preferably MiraLAX)**

*Helps with constipation associated with narcotic pain relievers.*

☐ **Tylenol (Acetaminophen)**

*Alternative to narcotic pain medication if pain is not severe. Do NOT take NSAIDS.*

☐ **Arnica**

*Take 3 tablets, 3 times a day, starting 3 days before your procedure date.*

☐ **Compression Wrap**

*Provided to you by The Naderi Center.*

#### NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY

- **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT OR SURGERY WILL BE CANCELLED.** 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 products, etc.
- **Shaving:** If you have facial hair, you should shave the night before or morning of your surgery so that the area is free of hair.

#### DAY OF SURGERY

- **Dress Comfortably:** Dress in comfortable, clean, and loose-fitting clothes. Shirts that can be buttoned or zipped up are preferred.
- **DO NOT wear** any makeup, jewelry, cosmetic creams, hair products, deodorant, sunscreen, and remove all piercings.



## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMENTAL LIPOSUCTION

### NIGHT OF SURGERY

- **Antibiotic:** Take your Antibiotics the night of surgery. Continue to take your antibiotics until finished.
- **Movement is Important:** Make sure you are 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 one to two weeks.
- **Dressing:** You will have a bandage wrapped around the chin area and head covering the surgical site which will apply pressure and minimize the risk of fluid build-up. DO NOT remove the dressing or get dressing wet the first night. Your surgeon will remove the dressing at your post-op day 1 visit unless otherwise specified. A compression wrap will be given to wear once dressing has been removed.
- **Compresses:** Once your dressing has been removed, apply **ice compresses** made of gauze sponges that are dipped into iced water. You may also use frozen peas wrapped in a towel as a cool compress. For the first 24-48 hours apply the cool compresses to your chin and neck area for 20 minutes at a time, taking breaks in between.

### MEDICATIONS

- **Antibiotic:** Start your antibiotic the night of your surgery and take all tablets as prescribed and until finished.
- **Pain Medication:** 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 Tylenol with the pain medication, often the medication you are prescribed will have Tylenol in it. **Do not exceed 4,000 mg of Tylenol in any 24-hour period.** Take medication with food to minimize risk of nausea.
- **Constipation:** You will experience constipation if taking narcotic pain relievers. MiraLAX or other over the counter laxatives are recommended. Do not wait to take until you are constipated. Begin treatment with narcotic use.

- **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.
- **Medications to Avoid:** Take only those medications approved or prescribed by your surgeon. Avoid medications containing aspirin or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Naproxen, others) for two weeks before and after surgery. These medications may increase bleeding.
- **Substances to Avoid:** Avoid alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine, for these will dramatically slow the healing process.

## **NUTRITION**

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

## **BATHING**

- **Showering:** You may remove your compression wrap to wash your hair and face as usual the next day following your surgery. Replace the wrap immediately after you shower. **Avoid submerging your neck in water.**
- **Hot Tubs/Baths/Swimming Pools:** No tub baths or Jacuzzi until your incisions have healed, and approved by your surgeon, which is usually around 2 weeks. It is best to wait one month for hot tubs as they tend to have more bacteria than regular chlorinated swimming pools.

## **HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR INCISIONS**

- **Cleaning your incisions:** Tape will be placed on the small incision line after your procedure. Keep this on until your one-week post-op appointment. If the tape comes off on its own, you may apply an antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin, Neosporin, etc.) to reinforce healing.
- **Crusting:** Occasionally, crusting will occur around the sutures. This is normal and will resolve. Do not try to pull off any crusts. Showering daily will minimize crusting. Apply your bacitracin ointment daily to keep incision sites moist.
- **Sutures:** Your surgeon will remove all necessary sutures at your post-op 1-week visit. All remaining sutures will be dissolvable. Sutures are usually removed 5-7 days after your procedure.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

- **Mild Bleeding/Drainage:** It is common to experience a small amount of bloody drainage from the liposuction access sites for the first several days after the procedure.
- **Bruising:** Bruising is a very common side effect of submental liposuction. You may have bruising under the chin that extends farther down the neck and even onto the chest. 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. Exercise and physical activity can transiently worsen swelling but is encouraged. Total resolution of swelling and skin shrinkage can take up to 3-6 months.
- **Itching:** Itching at the incision sites is normal for a few days. You may take Benadryl to help with this.
- **Pain:** It is normal to experience tightness, pressure, shooting pain, soreness, and fatigue for several days to weeks following surgery as your body recovers.
- **Sensory Changes in Skin:** There is usually an area of numbness under the chin following a liposuction procedure. This is temporary and will resolve with time.

## **ACTIVITY**

- **Physical Activity:** Normal daily activity may be resumed a few days after surgery. No bending over, straining, or lifting more than 5lbs for the first week after surgery. Be extremely careful if wearing any “pull-over the head” clothing.
- **Compression Wrap:** The compression wrap must ALWAYS be worn for the first week following the submental liposuction procedure, on and off for the next couple weeks as further advised by your surgeon. It is of crucial importance to make sure the wrap is placing smooth and even compression on the neck. No curling or bunching up of the wrap should occur.
- **Shaving:** It is common to have numbness and irritation under the chin following a submental liposuction procedure. For this reason, it is advised not to shave for at least the first 5 days after your procedure.
- **Driving:** 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 5-7 days off work depending on their job responsibilities and the amount of physical contact your job involves.
- **Exercise:** You can resume an exercise regimen in approximately 3 weeks after surgery, though start easy and build back up to your previous exercise levels. Just know that swelling may transiently be worse with exercise.
- **Travel:** Automobile travel can resume immediately, although frequent breaks are needed every 2 hours to prevent blood pooling in the legs and blood clots. Airline travel is restricted until 1 week postop. You will notice increased swelling with airline travel, and this can happen even 6-8 weeks due to the pressure changes that occur.

### **DO NOT'S**

- **DO NOT place anything frozen directly on the skin,** make sure ice is wrapped in gauze pad or a towel before applying it to the skin.
- **DO NOT soak in baths, jacuzzies, or hot tubs,** or submerge your face in water 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 rub or massage your neck** until after you are examined and told it is all right to do so.

### **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, warmth at incision site and temperature over 101 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **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.