

BREAST SURGERY

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Bathing

- You may shower 48-72 hours after surgery, unless instructed otherwise by your surgeon. **No baths.**
- Once cleared by your MD to shower, remove surgical bra and dressings **except the steri-strips/tape** over incision(s).
- Some areas may bleed slightly — this is normal and should subside quickly when dry.

Activity

- No reaching above your head for 2 weeks.
- Sleep on your back, not your stomach, for at least one week.
- Walk every hour while awake to promote adequate circulation to your heart and lungs.
- Do not lift more than 10 lbs (or more than a gallon of milk) and avoid strenuous activity. Your provider will advise when you are able to increase your activity at your post-op appointment.
- Do not swim, use hot tubs, tub bathe, or submerge your wounds in water until fully healed —typically 4-6 weeks.

Diet

- Slowly resume your normal diet as tolerated.
- Pain meds and anesthesia may cause constipation. Be prepared with miralax and colace.
- Incorporate high protein foods into your diet to promote healing.
- Stay hydrated.

Wound Care/Dressings

- Wear your surgical bra day and night for 2 weeks, except for showering and laundering.
- Apply a small amount of gauze over incisions if they are weeping fluid. **Always leave the steri-strips/tape in place.**
- Your surgical area may have temporary numbness and you may experience nipple hyper/hyposensitivity.
- Do not use heating pads or cold packs on the surgical area.
- Most stitches are dissolvable and do not require removal. Stitch removal, if needed, will be assessed at your 2-3 week post-op appointment.

Medications

- Take all medications as prescribed by your physician.
- Pain medication will reduce discomfort but may not eliminate pain completely.
- Do not exceed prescribed doses.
- You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for mild pain, but please ensure your prescription pain medication does not already contain acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- Avoid aspirin and NSAIDs (Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen) for 72 hours after surgery, as they may increase bleeding risk.

Call Promptly If You Experience...

- Significant swelling or swelling on only one side
- Shortness of breath
- Calf pain or soreness
- Fever greater than 100.4°F (38°C)
- Redness or warmth around your incision
- Changes in drainage (thick, yellow, green, bright red), a foul odor, or a sudden increase in drainage.
- Severe pain that is not relieved by medication.
- If you believe you are having a reaction to a medication.