



## **At-Home Instructions**

### **Breast Reconstruction**

#### **Using tissue Expanders and exchanging expanders for permanent implants.**

The following instructions will help you know what to expect in the days following your surgery. Do not, however, hesitate to call our office at 216-292-6800 if you have any questions or concerns.

### **General Instructions**

- Sleep in a flexed position with your head and shoulders elevated. Sleep on your back to keep pressure off the breasts. Keep pillows under your knees for the first few days. You can resume your normal sleep position in 4 weeks.
- Driving is prohibited for 1 week, or until off of pain medication.
- Avoid heavy lifting (no more than 5 pounds) and vigorous use of arms for the first 3 weeks after surgery.
- Start arm raising exercises (starting slowly and gently) on the first postoperative day, or as instructed.
- Smoking is prohibited at least 2 weeks before and until you are completely healed, and until instructed by the doctor. No smoking with a history of radiation.

### **Diet**

- Resume normal diet as tolerated.

### **Special Instructions**

Follow these instructions for **3-4 BEFORE your surgery** and for another **2 weeks AFTER surgery**.

- There is absolutely NO driving while on pain medication or Valium® (see medicine list given to you with your pre-operative paperwork).

## **Do NOT take the following products:**

- Aspirin/low-dose aspirin
- Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®)
- Naprosyn or Naproxen (Aleve®)
- Vitamin E (even small amounts in mutli-vitamins)
- Herbals, homeopathic medicines, or green tea
- Protein Supplements (shakes, energy drinks)
- Growth hormone
- Diet pills (Meridia®, Metabolife®, etc.

**Tylenol containing product (acetaminophen) are safe to take. If you are unsure about what products to take or avoid, call the office at 216-292-6800.**

## **Pain Control/Medications**

- You will receive a prescription for pain medication that can be taken as directed, if needed for pain control.
- The pain medication may cause constipation and does impair you ability to drive or make important decisions (have over the counter Colace or laxative on hand).

## **Wound Care**

- NO showering until drains are removed.
- You will have some swelling or bruising of the breasts and upper abdomen. This is normal and will lessen over a period of 12 months.
- You may notice a change in sensation or numbness of the nipple or breast skin, secondary to swelling. This is common after surgery and should improve gradually over time.
- After the dressings are removed, you may shower daily, avoiding hot water. After showering, pat the steri-strips dry. After 7-10 days, the steri-strips will begin to curl and the ends may be removed.
- The incisions on your breasts may be red for 3-6 months. The color will begin to fade.
- A surgical bra should be worn 24 hours a day, except in the shower for 4 weeks. The bra should not be tight, have under wires, or have a strong elastic should fit loosely. The doctor's office will advise on the type of bra for weeks 2-4.
- Drains are usually removed within 7-14 days after surgery.
- Use gauze pads to protect your clothing from any oozing at the incision sites. Once your drains are removed, fluid can leak from drain holes. This can occur when walking or rolling over in bed, and can saturate your clothes and linens. This is normal.
- An antibiotic will be prescribed to prevent infection. Please finish the entire prescription.

- Each day apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin®, Neosporin®, Bactroban®) to the drain holes.
- You can expect to start expander infusions within 2-3 weeks. These are scheduled at 1 to 3 week intervals until the desired volume is obtained. This volume will be maintained until the time for the exchange to a permanent implant.

Follow-up with your post-operative visit scheduled 1 week after your procedure. At this time, we will remove some of your stitches and give you further post-op instructions.

**Call the office at the first sign of:**

- Excessive pain associated with pressure of the breast.
- One breast swelling by several cup sizes.
- Bleeding at the incision.
- Redness, drainage or odor from the incisions.
- Fever or chills.
- Shortness of breath.
- Any reaction from prescribed medication (Example: nausea with vomiting, hives or swelling).

**Do not hesitate to call if you have questions or concerns!**

The office of Mark A. Foglietti, D.O., FACOS and Alanna F. Fostyk, D.O.  
216-292-6800

**Please call with any questions.**