

Brachioplasty Post - Operative Instructions

-Your first postoperative appointment will be made for approximately 7 days after surgery. This appointment can be made for you prior to your procedure or you can call and schedule after your surgery.

-You must have an adult drive you home from the facility. You will not be allowed to drive yourself or use public transportation.

-After you return home, you must have a responsible adult stay with you for a minimum of 24 hours. You cannot be left alone. The 24 hours begins when you are discharged from the hospital. Have everything ready at home prior to surgery. Make arrangements for someone to stay with you. Let the person or persons know, that you cannot be left alone. This is important because of the danger of falling and you may lose the concept of time for the day and overmedicate yourself.

-The effects of anesthesia can persist for 72 hours. You must exercise extreme caution before engaging in any activity that could be harmful to yourself or others

-Drink fluids (water is the best) to help rid the body of the medications used in surgery. Use straws as this will be easier and you will tend to drink more fluids the first few days after surgery. Diet may be as tolerated. Eating foods that are bland and soft for the first day or so – foods like after you have had the flu- may be best tolerated. You must eat more than crackers and juice; otherwise you will continue to feel weak and will not heal as well. Remember to take the medications with a little something to eat or you will get sick to your stomach. Avoid excessive salt intake, as this can cause fluid retention and increase swelling.

- Upon your return home, light activity is permitted, such a walking, riding in a car, or any activity that is not strenuous. Do not remain in bed all day. Get out of bed for all meals. Although it may be uncomfortable, it is imperative to take short, light walks around the house at least three times daily starting the day you return home. This will help decrease the formation of blood clots in the legs.

-Do not play sports (i.e. tennis, golf, swimming, running, yoga, and dance) or perform heavy house/yard work for 6 weeks after surgery. Do not lift anything over 10 pounds for 6 weeks after surgery. Avoid lifting or carrying small children, groceries, suitcases, or anything else over 10 pounds for 6 weeks. Avoid vigorous workouts for 6 weeks after surgery. Light cardio activity (i.e. walking moderate distances outside, light treadmill/stationary bike) may be resumed 3 weeks after surgery.

-Your greatest pain and discomfort will occur during the first 2-3 days after surgery. Take your pain medication routinely during this time, then taper off according to your pain level. Do not take acetaminophen products at the same time as your prescription pain medication, as your prescription pain medication has acetaminophen included in it. You may, however, start to alternate extra strength Tylenol and your prescription pain medication, as you wean off the prescription pain medication. Do not take ibuprofen products (i.e. Advil, Aleve, Motrin) for a week after your surgery.

-You may shower the day after surgery. Wash all incisions gently with soap and water. If you have white tape (steri strips) on your incisions, leave this intact as it can get wet and normally will not come off in the shower. Remove your compression garment prior to showering and replace it when finished. Please note, that if you have a lot of swelling, it may be very difficult and painful to place your compression garment back on. If this is the case, you may want to wait 2 to 3 days to shower. Do not soak in a bathtub, hot tub, or sauna for 6 weeks after surgery.

-Do not use ice or heat. The use of ice packs is not recommended after all surgeries. After some surgeries the skin can be numb for a period of time thereby not allowing you to feel that it is too cold. Please check with the office staff to determine whether ice packs are indicated after your surgery. If the staff recommends them cold or ice packs help to reduce swelling, bruising, and pain. Use frozen peas in the package or crush ice cubes and put the ice into a zip-lock bag. This should help, not hurt. If the ice feels too uncomfortable, don't use it as often. Do not use heat or warm compresses either. Do not clean you incisions with Hydrogen Peroxide because it can kill wound healing cells. The incision does not require ointment. Some itching of the healing wounds is expected, but avoid scratching incisions.

-Sleep on your back during the immediate postoperative period. Prop both arms up with pillows so they are elevated at a level above your chest. This will help decrease the swelling. Normal sleeping positions can be resumed 2-3 weeks after surgery. Your arms will be wrapped to help minimize swelling. It is not uncommon for your hands to become swollen after surgery. If it becomes excessive, contact our office.

-Avoid intercourse for two weeks, and then continue to be careful for the next two weeks. No smoking for 6 weeks after surgery. Drinking alcoholic beverages may be resumed only after you are off all prescription pain medication. Do not sit in the sun for 4 weeks. After that, it is extremely important to place sunscreen, minimum of SPF 30, to all scars when outside for a minimum of one year after surgery. Sun exposure can cause permanent discoloration of the scars. Sunlight can even reach scars under a swimsuit or clothing, so take adequate precautions.

Contact our office with any questions at (302) 888-0508