



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS – BRACHIOPLASTY

Patient Name: _____ **Date of Post-Op:** _____

Medications:

Be sure to take all antibiotics as directed until you finish the prescription. Take your pain medicine as needed for discomfort. Do not take any pain medicine on an empty stomach and avoid the use of Tylenol while taking your narcotics (most narcotics also contain Tylenol). Do not take any other anti-inflammatory medications (e.g.: Aspirin, Advil, Ibuprofen) unless directed by your doctor because they can cause bleeding. Avoid Vitamin E, Herbal meds or teas, Fish Oil & Alcohol. An over the counter stool softener (Colace or Miralax) is recommended if you are taking prescription narcotic pain medication since they may cause constipation.

Dressing – Shower – Bath:

You may shower 2 days after surgery. Use the Hibiclens soap to wash your incision until the bottle is empty. Reapply a clean gauze dressing after showering. No hot tubs, swimming or bathtubs until wounds are completely healed.

Diet:

You will commence with a clear liquid diet, and then progress to your regular diet if you experience no nausea.

Activity – Exercising:

Slow walking is allowed anytime. Brisk walking may be resumed in 3 weeks after surgery. No strenuous exercise (aerobics, jogging) is allowed 4 to 6 weeks after surgery. No heavy lifting (greater than 5 lbs) is permitted for 4 weeks after surgery. Do NOT drive a car for 7-10 days or until off all narcotic pain medication. **NO TRAVEL FOR 2 WEEKS POSTOPERATIVELY!!! Make plans accordingly.**

Return to Work:

If you have a “desk job” you may return to work 2 weeks after surgery. If your job requires strenuous activity or lifting of heavy weight, you may return to work 3 to 4 weeks after surgery.

Sutures-Drains:

Most of your sutures are internal and will absorb on their own. You may have a few sutures that will need to be removed at the first visit after surgery. If drains were placed at the time of surgery, your doctor will remove them in the office 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. Prior to hospital discharge, the nurses will review how to empty and record the amount of fluid that has accumulated. Watch for symptoms of **Cellulitis** (warm, red, unusual swelling, tender skin to the touch). Call the office immediately if you do.

Drain Care:

Strip Drain Tubes 3 times per day. When emptying drain bulb, empty the contents 3 times a day and record amount

Swelling-Bruising-Numbness-Itching:

These are all to be expected after your procedure. Swelling will increase over the first 4 to 5 days and then will slowly resolve. It may be 6 months before this is completely gone. You may experience itching of the surgical area which is normal. Numbness to areas of the arms may occur and persist for 6 months; however you may experience permanent loss of sensation in some areas.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE
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