



YTF Cosmetic Plastic Surgery Network

Helpful Tips and Suggestions For After Your Surgery

- **Have a Caretaker.** Have your significant other, parent or good friend there to take care of you for the first 48 to 72 hours. Although a week is even better.
- **Communication with your caregiver.** Use your cellphone, a whistle on hand, a walkie-talkie or an intercom system so that you may alert your caregiver in case of need.
- Be observant. Watch for suspicious swelling and discolorations that could be a hematoma. Know the difference between a hematoma and a bruise.
- **Take your antibiotics on time.** Taking your antibiotics on time decreases your chances of an infection. Also, remember that some antibiotics decrease the effectiveness of birth control pills. be careful.
- **Take your pain medications on time.** There is simply no reason to feel discomfort. Studies have proven that lack of pain and stress can significantly decrease healing time.
- **Make a time chart** for when to take your medications. Some are taken 1 every four hours, some are taken four a day. Don't confuse the instructions.
- **Take your temperature regularly.** An elevated temperature could mean an infection.
- **Be diligent with your icing** (as instructed), especially in the first 48 hours. Do not place ice or extremely cold compresses directly on skin for long periods of time.
- **No lifting anything** which weighs over 5 pounds for at least two weeks, heavier objects for even longer.
- **No bending over.** This is important. position your treatment area below your heart increases blood pressure on the wounds and can cause hemorrhaging.
- **Get plenty of rest.** Sleep gives your body more time and energy to direct towards healing.
- **Proper elevation is imperative.** In addition to sleeping elevated on several pillows, placing pillows along side of you as well as one under your knees will keep you from rolling over in your sleep.
- **Eat regularly.** Your body needs energy and proper nutrition to heal itself. If you are feeling nauseated from your medication, try taking them with low sodium crackers or Vanilla Wafers.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Your body needs to be properly hydrated to help flush out the residual anesthesia and pain medications. Medications can be binding and lack of hydration only exacerbates the problem.
- **You may be constipated.** Mild stool softeners like Colace are really effective but ask your surgeon. Some patients recommend Daikon (root vegetable) to help with constipation which is brought on by pain medications.
- **You will be bloated** for a while, try not to let it get you down.
- **Improve circulation:** Occasionally and carefully get up and walk around when you are able to, but don't over do it. Movement helps with fluid and blood circulation to hinder clot formation in the legs and also helps with constipation. You can also perform mild exercises in bed or while sitting that improve leg circulation. This is done by pointing your toed towards your knees for several seconds, alternating with pointing your toes away from. Do this several times. Also try making circles with your toes pointed by using the range of motion of your ankles. This causes muscle contractions which in turn increases blood flow.
- **Smoking.** If you quit smoking, please do not start again. Smoking decreases vascularity and can result in wound closure problems and necrosis (death) of skin cells and tissue.

- **Hygiene.** Keep moist towelettes or baby wipes near the bed so that you can freshen up without much effort in the first day or two.
- **Photo documentation.** Taking day by day progress photos is always interesting to look back and helpful to others if you plan on documenting your experience.
- **Write or type in your journal daily** because you will forget later due to the amnesiac properties of the anesthesia.
- **Stay Away From Aspirin or Alcohol.** Make sure you don't take any aspirin containing products or drink alcohol for at least 2 weeks (or however long your surgeon advises) after your surgery.
- **Communication with your friends** Have someone post to or email your online friends after your surgery or they are going to be worry about you.
- **Support.** Have your friends stop by or when you are up to it. Perhaps get out and breathe some fresh air. The change of scenery will do you well. Just don't overdo it.
- **Keep your emotions in check.** Remember that you are healing and not to judge your outcome prematurely.
- **Be sure to go to your post-operative appointments.** These are very important.
- **Avoid accidental bumps.** Be careful around your significant other, children and pets so that your treatment area isn't accidentally bumped. Remind them to be careful.
- **Alleviate back pain.** Sleeping elevated can cause lower back pains. You may wish to try a heating pad, hot water bottles, or a large tube sock filled with raw rice which has been heated in the microwave. No sleeping on any heat sources!
- **Showering.** You may wish to place a plastic lawn chair or medical shower chair in your shower in the event that you get dizzy. After you exit the shower, ascertain there is bathmat and place a towel on the closed toilet seat to sit down to dry yourself.
- **Menstrual Cycle (if applicable).** If you are expecting your period and it does not arrive, do not automatically think you are pregnant. Medications, trauma and anesthesia can alter your menstrual cycle. However, remember than antibiotics can decrease the effectiveness of oral birth control and to use another method of protection just in case.
- **Depression.** It is possible that you may experience mild feelings of depression starting a few days to a few weeks after your surgery.. This can be very normal so keep positive. Your body has been put through a lot and it is a matter of time before everything goes back to normal.
- **Relax and don't stress.**

Notes:

The content of this file is for informational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult your own surgeon or other qualified healthcare provider should you have any questions regarding this information or a medical condition. Do not disregard the advice of your own surgeon as a result of reading any information found on our websites, including this document or any information you may read on our plastic surgery discussion forums.