

**ABDOMINAL ETCHING
AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. After surgery, it is important to have someone available to stay with you for the first 24 hours. You may be weak and drowsy and require help the first few times you get out of bed.
2. While in bed, keep your legs elevated to 30-45 degrees (2-3 pillows) and your knees flexed. Move your legs and flex/extend your ankles several times per hour. Do not cross your legs, as this increases the risk for blood clots.
3. It is very important to get out of bed (with assistance) as early and often as possible after your surgery to prevent postoperative problems. While the goal is to move about, even getting out of bed and into a chair will be beneficial. Attempt to walk 15-20 minutes 6 times per day.
4. Please take frequent deep breaths to keep your lungs clear (15-20 per hour).
5. A light diet is best after surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or Jell-O. You may start a regular diet the next day. Over the next 6 weeks, a high protein diet will benefit your recovery. Daily protein supplementation with pre-made shakes (eg. Boost, Muscle Milk) or soluble powder (whey, soy etc.) from a nutrition store is recommended.
6. Please take the pain medication as directed for the first 2-3 days after surgery. It is not uncommon for you to need it every 3-4 hours. Take it with crackers, Jell-O, etc. After this time, take the pain medication only if you have pain. If the prescription pain medication is too strong for your pain needs, over the counter ibuprofen (400-800 mg every 6-8 hours) can be substituted. In addition, you may be given an anti-anxiety/muscle relaxant medication that you may take as well to prevent aggravation of the pain cycle.
7. External sutures at the liposuction access sites will dissolve and fall out on their own over the first two weeks.
8. It is normal to experience a pink fluid discharge from the liposuction access sites for a couple days after the procedure. This is mostly excess fluid introduced as part of the liposuction procedure. Drainage may increase as you become more mobile and stand for longer periods of time.
9. The compression garment must be worn AT ALL TIMES for 1 week. You may remove the garment to shower starting 24 hours after surgery. Be sure someone is with you to help, as it is not uncommon to feel dizzy or lightheaded while standing for prolonged periods of time. If needed, sit or lie down 20 minutes prior to showering.
10. Continue to wear the compression garment at night for the 2nd week after surgery. If

you wish, a short sleeve Lycra shirt without zippers (eg. Under Armour) may be purchased at a department store and worn under clothing. These types of compression garments often provide additional support and comfort during healing.

11. **DO NOT SMOKE** or ingest any nicotine containing products. This is very important for optimal wound healing.

12. You may gradually resume normal daily activities after 48 hours being careful to avoid any activity that causes pain or discomfort. Strenuous activities and exercises are to be avoided until 3 weeks after surgery. During this recovery period your heart rate should stay below 100 beats per minute and strengthening movements of the abdomen avoided.

13. Prolonged soaking of the incision sites in a bathtub, hot tub, swimming pool or other body of water should be avoided for 3 weeks to allow proper healing to occur.

14. All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact or tanning booths are to be avoided. Use of a clinical grade sunscreen with SPF 30 and zinc oxide (UVA and UVB protection) is recommended for at least 6 months.

15. Beginning at 3 weeks after surgery, apply a scar cream to the access incisions to maximize wound healing. Use the cream for 6 months after surgery. The addition of a hydrating cream and vitamin cream will promote early softening and maturation of these areas.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY

Most people experience muscle soreness as opposed to sharp pains for about 7 days after surgery. In addition, sensations like numbness, itching and burning are common during the healing process. These sensations may last several weeks and will gradually disappear.

Bruising and swelling are to be expected. Slight bruising can be apparent for as long as 1 month afterwards.

The body retains fluid in response to surgery so the final results will not be immediately apparent. In addition, you may find that your clothes do not fit as easily as before for the first week. Be patient- the swelling will gradually subside and you will see the six-pack abs you desire.

Discomfort from gas and bloating can be magnified after surgery. Suggestions to minimize symptoms include limiting spicy foods, avoiding carbonated drinks, and restricting intake of sugar-free products containing Xylitol.

Please note:

- If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call our office.

- If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 100°), redness and/or increased pain at the surgical incision sites, please call Dr. Beck immediately.

FOLLOW-UP INSTRUCTIONS

It is important to be seen by Dr. Beck after your initial post-op checks. He will see you for follow-up appointments at 1 week, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 1-year post-op. For your convenience you may schedule your appointments at either our Southlake or Dallas office (see below). To schedule your appointment please call us at 214-818-4751 between the hours of 8:30 am – 5:00 pm at least 1 week prior to your desired date.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL DR. BECK

If you need immediate care, please call Dr. Beck anytime on his cell. There is no such thing as a minor question. I would rather you call me than wonder and not do the right thing, so please call my office, or email me anytime.

Dr. Beck’s cell: given at time of surgery

Dr. Beck’s office: 214-818-4751

Dr. Beck’s email: drbeck@dpsi.org

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