

DR. CUSHING'S POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Breast Reduction

ACTIVITY

The first 24 hours are best spent resting. You should get up to walk to the bathroom and kitchen several times per day and try to take deep breaths several times an hour. This will help prevent blood clots in your legs and help your lungs heal from the anesthesia used in surgery.

You may resume many daily activities the day after surgery. Walking is encouraged. Exercise and lifting that requires straining (more than about a gallon of milk) should be avoided for 2 weeks post-operatively. You may resume aerobic exercise (bike riding, aerobics, etc) 2-3 weeks after surgery. All types of exercise are permitted after 6 weeks.

You may resume driving when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication during the day.

Average return to work time is around 1-2 weeks depending on the level of activity required by your job.

DRESSINGS

You will have a surgical bra after surgery that can be removed to shower. You can wear this bra or another soft bra (no underwire) for six weeks after surgery.

You may take a warm (not hot) shower 48 hours after surgery. Do not take a bath. Remove all of the dressings from your incisions, including the yellow gauze on your skin. If this is stuck, you may get in the shower and the water will help loosen it.

After the shower, you can pat dry with a towel or air-dry, but do not rub your breasts. You can apply a fragrance-free moisturizer to the breasts and surrounding skin, but not on the incisions. You can also use deodorant.

You can put Vaseline or aquaphor on your incisions. You can apply topical antibiotics to areas that are red and warm to the touch. Avoid using topical antibiotics on the entire incision because they may cause skin irritation.

Maxipads or gauze may be placed into your bra to absorb any drainage from your breasts.

PAIN MEDICATION

Pain medication prescribed post-operatively should be taken as directed to relieve pain. You can also take over the counter medications such as ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve). Do not take Tylenol in addition to the prescription pain medication. We also recommend that you use a stool softener to avoid constipation. If you are prescribed antibiotics, take those until all the pills are gone.

The tube placed in your throat for anesthesia during your surgery may cause your throat to be sore for a few days. This is best relieved with cold liquids or a sore throat spray.

DIET

You may resume your normal diet. Start with bland foods and slowly return to your normal diet over the first day or two.

Pain medication (especially opioids such as hydrocodone) can cause constipation. Take a stool softener twice a day and try to eat foods with lots of fiber. If you are still having trouble with bowel movements, you may need to add a laxative or glycerin suppository to help.

HEALING

You can expect drainage (usually bloody), swelling, bruising and discoloration of the breasts. One side may be a bit different from the other during the first few days and weeks, both as far as pain and swelling are concerned. The contour may be irregular, but generally it settles with the help of time and gravity.

The bottom of your breast where the incisions come together may take a little longer to heal than the rest of the incisions.

Immediately after surgery, breasts may appear high, full at the top, and feel slightly hard. They may also appear slightly squared off at the bottom. This is all normal and expected and will resolve over time. You may also experience changes in sensation such as burning, tingling, and numbness. These symptoms also will resolve with time.

After your incisions heal over (after the first two weeks or so), you can continue to apply the Vaseline/aquaphor or switch to scar creams or vitamin E.

Call our office at 601-939-9999 if you experience any of the following:

- Heavy, bright red, bloody drainage
- A sudden increase in firmness and swelling of one breast
- Fever above 101.5 degrees