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PLASTIC SURGERY

Care after Breast Augmentation

This page contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding your care after a breast augmentation. This information will help you remember the instructions given to you after surgery.

What will I see when I look into a mirror?

The incisions will be covered with surgical tape plus a surgical bra which is placed on your chest at the time of surgery. This initial dressing can be removed 48 hours after your surgery. Your breasts will feel swollen and tight and may appear mildly bruised. The bruising will last about 2 weeks. You may have a sensation of numbness of the breasts and nipples which may last for 2-3 months, sometimes longer. The breasts will gradually soften and take their final shape in approximately 3 months after your surgery.

When can I shower or take a bath?

You can normally shower 48 hours after your surgery using a mild fragrance-free soap such as Ivory or Dove. Avoid using hot water. Your breasts will be tender, so wash this area gently and pat dry with a clean towel. Allow the area to fully dry before putting on your post op surgical bra. You may wash and dry your surgical bra while you are in the shower.

Should I wear a bra?

For your comfort, we recommend that you wear a bra night and day for 3 weeks following your surgery, removing the bra only for bathing. When you begin to wear a normal bra, it is recommended that you not use an underwire bra. Some women find that a sports bra feels the most comfortable early after surgery. After 4 weeks, you may choose to wear other bra styles, (NO PUSH UP bras.) You may also choose to not wear a bra for periods of time if comfortable.

What bra size will I be?

In general, the number of bra will not change. Your cup size will be larger. Wait several weeks before purchasing a new set of bras.

What can I do after surgery?

You should take it easy for several days following the surgery and gradually increase your activity as you feel more comfortable. Avoid heavy exercise during this time and only gradually return to your normal routine. You can resume all of your normal activities about three weeks after surgery. Try to sleep on your back for two weeks using pillows to elevate your upper body.

When can I drive?

You generally should be able to drive about 2 to 5 days after surgery if you feel up to it. You should never drive if you are still taking any pain medication other than Tylenol.

When will I be able to return to work?

Depending on the type of work you do, you should be able to return to your job as soon as you are comfortable. If your job does not require heavy activity, you should be able to go back in 3 to 5 days.

How much pain will I have?

The most discomfort that you will have lasts 24 to 48 hours, sometimes a little longer. As you feel more comfortable, your need for medication will lessen.

What medications should I use? We will prescribe a pain medication for you and we will also ask you to take an antibiotic. Follow the directions on the bottle for their use. The pain medication may make you feel drowsy, so please have someone assist you at home and do not attempt to drive while you are taking the prescription pain medication. A few days after surgery, most women will find that Tylenol will take care of the discomfort. Do not use aspirin for 7-10 days after surgery.

Can I drink alcohol?

Do not drink alcohol for five days after your surgery or while on the prescription pain medication.

When will I be seen in the office after surgery?

You will normally be seen in the office within one week of your surgery and then at 2 weeks, 4 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months after surgery to monitor healing. Additional appointments may be necessary and will be determined by your recovery.

How will I know if I am having a problem?

Urgent problems after breast augmentation do not occur frequently. These are the complications that will require a change in your post-operative care:

Hematoma (blood collecting around your implants) can occur within a few days of your surgery.

The warning signs are:

- Severe pain that does not respond to medication
- Significant swelling in your breast
- Excessive or growing bruising of the breast or chest wall

Infection is rare following breast augmentation. It is normal to have a very small amount of drainage from your incisions for one to two days. Signs of infection are:

- Increased temperature
- Increasing drainage from the incisions
- Increasing redness around the incisions

Leg swelling (with or without associated pain) may indicate a problem with the vein circulation in your leg(s). Although some swelling is to be expected due to your surgery, intravenous fluids given to you during the surgery and your decreased level of activity, this swelling is normally mild, painless, and affects both legs evenly. If you have a large amount of leg swelling (either one or both legs), or if you experience pain in your legs contact the office immediately.

Breathing problems after breast augmentation are rare but can be a serious complication. If you develop any chest and/or back pain or shortness of breath, you must contact our office or be seen in the nearest emergency medical facility without delay.

Medication reactions may occur with the drugs prescribed for you. If you develop a skin rash, itching, vomiting, or diarrhea, stop taking your medication and contact my office.

If you have any of the above problems or other questions, contact my office at 440-461-7999