

THE FIRST GLANCE

ABDOMINOPLASTY POST CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Supplies to have at home:

- Your prescription medications (will be given to you on surgery day if not at pre-op appt)
- Gravol (oral medication & suppositories available). Used to treat nausea
- Stool softener (ie: Restorolax/Lax-a-Day/Senokot). Used to prevent constipation
- Anti-biotic Ointment (Bacitracin, Polysporin)
- Flexible gauze wrap (ie: Johnson & Johnson 3" or 4" soft gauze roll) Non-stick gauze or nursing pads work well
- Hypoallergenic Paper Medical Tape (3M or similar)
- Abdominal binder/medical compression garment given day of Pre-op or day of surgery

Rest and Relaxation:

- When resting, it is ok to lie on your side. Tuck your legs up when lying on your side and place 2 to 3 pillows under your knees when sleeping on your back.

**You can also purchase a "Bed Wedge pillow", available on Amazon (ABCOSPORT 25"x24"x12" approx. \$65).

- Take 10 nice big deep breaths every hour while awake.
- When coughing or sneezing open your mouth and place your hands on your abdomen. Gently push on your abdominal incision to protect it.

Activities:

- Make sure you walk as much as possible and lean forward at your waist (approx 30° angle) to decrease tension on your abdominal incision.
- After 2 weeks you can begin to stand straight.
- If you have had your rectus (abdominal) muscles tightened, do not lift more than 10 lbs or perform abdominal exercises for minimum of 4 weeks.
- Wait at least 4 weeks before participating in physical activities that will increase your heart rate and blood pressure.

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Medications:

- Take your pain medication as directed when you get home. You may find these do not eliminate your discomfort 100%, but you will feel more comfortable. Pain is expected, the goal is to make the pain tolerable.
- Take all medications as prescribed, ensure you finish your entire course of antibiotics even if you do not experience any signs of infection.
- Resume prescribed medications unless otherwise stated
- Follow all instructions which may accompany the medications such as: taking with food, avoiding alcohol and driving restrictions.

Dressings/Wound Care

- Outer White Dressing may be removed after 48hrs, including the dressing in your belly button.
- Leave your steri-strips (paper tapes on incisions) on for as long as possible, typically they can be removed around 2 weeks. If the edges start to lift, you can trim them or if they are very saturated or are starting to come off sooner then you may remove them.
- Once the Steri Strips are removed, apply Anti-biotic Ointment to your incisions once a day for one week.
- You may begin to apply your Scar Gel 3 weeks post-surgery, if there are NO open areas along incision
 - If you have **had your abdominal muscles repaired** (sheath plication) Wear your abdominal binder/garment for 20 to 24 hours per day for the first 4 weeks, then for 12 hours during the day for 2 more weeks. Take binder off for 3-4hrs per day while lying down.
- If you **did not require muscle repair** then wear your garment for 20-24 hours per day for 4 weeks, then for 12 hours during the day for 2 more weeks.
- It is normal to experience some redness and irritation to the incision around your navel during the first week or two, this is due to the type of suture that is used in the area.
- Bleeding from your surgical site may occur following surgery. If it occurs hold constant firm pressure for 10 minutes with a clean towel.

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- Take time to rest and recover from your surgery, have a healthy diet and get lots of rest. It is important that you follow these recommendations carefully so we can attain your surgical goals.

Washing

- You may shower once the outer dressings are removed (even if you still have drains in.) It may be helpful to wear a lanyard around your neck and pin the drains up to keep them out of the way.
- Dry surgical site by gently patting with a clean towel or allow to air dry.
- Do not soak surgical sites - no baths, pools, hot tubs, or lake water for 4 weeks.
- You do not require any bandages once your initial bandages are removed, however, most patients feel more comfortable with a bandage to provide extra protection. Flexible gauze wrap can be used as a dressing once the original dressings have been removed.

Drain Care

- Empty drains as instructed and document drainage. Drains are removed once drainage is less than 30cc over 24 hours for 3 consecutive days.
- Anticipate your drains being in for approximately 10 days, but no longer than 14 days.
- Apply antibiotic ointment at drain site and cover with gauze to absorb fluid that may leak out. This is normal and can occur for 1 week after drains have been removed
- Drain sites will close in 7 to 10 days.
- If there is a gush of fluid that occurs, this is likely fluid that was not picked up by the drain, this is normal.
- Get into the shower and gently push on your abdomen to encourage the fluid to drain out.
- If drainage persists or is predominantly fresh blood contact Dr. Mitchell.

Three Weeks after your Surgery

- Begin to massage your incisions with Skin Medica Scar Recovery Gel
- If your incisions are going to be exposed to the sun, apply SPF 45 or higher for at least one year to prevent tanning.

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Please contact the clinic immediately and request to speak to a nurse or physician if you experience any of the following after surgery.

- Increased pain, increased redness, creamy or pus-like discharge, foul odour, or
- Increased warmth around surgical site, rash, fever exceeding 38.8° C (101.8°F)
- Chest pain (for continuous chest pain lasting more than 5 minutes – call 911)
- Unexplained sudden onset of shortness of breath
- Rapid pulse or heart palpitations
- Severe pain in leg that does not resolve and/or swelling of leg
- Changes in skin colour of an extremity, such as turning pale, red or blue
- Dizziness that does not resolve, or fainting
- Coughing up blood / Bloody diarrhea

After Hour Care

If there is a concern about your surgery or your healing, please call The First Glance Clinic at 204-885-1419.

If the clinic is closed (evenings or weekends) or in case of an emergency please call Dr. Mitchell **431-302-9669**

If after 3 attempts you cannot reach Dr Mitchell, please call the plastic surgery resident by calling St. Boniface Hospital Operator at 204-237-2053