



**Cosmetic Plastic
Surgery Institute**

Breast Augmentation Postop Instructions

- 1. Position:** For at least the first week after surgery, try to sleep on your back. In order to avoid turning on your side, you may use a pillow on each side of you during sleep. If you are a restless sleeper, you may consider sleeping in a Lazy Boy chair. You should also use two pillows to elevate and support your head and back which will reduce breast swelling.
- 2. Dressings:** At the end of surgery a Kerlex and Ace wrap dressings will be applied around your chest. These dressings are kept in place for two weeks after which you may start wearing an exercise bra (one which does not have an under wire). In addition, a breast band, a strap with a flower, will be used to keep the implants down in the breast pockets. Although this may be a nuisance, it is important to keep the breast band on at all times in order to ensure that your implants do not rise to an asymmetric or undesired position). Some patients may need to keep their breast band in place for up to six weeks.
- 3. Use of arms/pecs:** As you know your surgery includes partial placement of breast implants under the pectoralis muscle. As a result, your implant position can be affected by the use of your pectoralis (functions to push your chest away [such as when performing a push up or when getting out of bed] as well as when lifting something heavy [the pectoralis assists the biceps muscle when flexing you arm]). Although it is not intuitive, every time you use your pecs, your implant is pulled upward. In order to counter this undesired force, you are recommended to wear your breast band and to avoid using your pecs when getting out of bed or when lifting objects. You will have to watch both of these motions for the first six weeks following surgery.
- 4. Sutures:** Sutures are usually internal and not visible; instead, you will find a white tape glued to your incision site. This white tape is called a Steri-Strip and acts like an external stitch. For optimum results, this tape is kept in place for four to six weeks. It has been estimated that at six weeks following surgery, your surgical incision line will have gained 80% of its over all strength! Keeping the tape much longer is less beneficial because even though 80% of the strength is gained within 6 weeks, complete healing does not occur for up to one year.
- 5. Exposure to sunlight:** Sunlight will cause all surgical incisions to darken. Surgical incisions are darkest from two to three months, after which they will fade gradually over one to two years. During the early postoperative period, protecting surgical incisions from the sunlight, will promote quicker fading. Even through clothes, a good deal of sunlight can reach the skin and cause damage. It is imperative that you wear a sunscreen with a skin-protection factor (SPF) of at least 20 when you are going to be in the sun.
- 6. Showering and Bathing:** You may shower 36 hours after surgery and only below the waist. One week following surgery you will be allowed to take down your Ace wrap and to have a full shower. The small tapes (Steri-Strips) will remain in place when showering and do not have to be removed until they fall off on their own or are removed by your doctor at 6 weeks following surgery. To ensure that the Steri-Strips remain in place try not to direct the showerhead at the surgical incision sites.



7. Healing of sensory nerves: When tolerable, tingling and burning indicate regrowth of the sensory nerves. If these sensations cause pain, gentle self-massage can help desensitize area of tenderness. If the pain gets progressively worse and intolerable, you should make sure you don't have an infection or blood accumulation called a hematoma; you should contact your doctor immediately.

8. Asymmetry: The two breasts commonly heal quite differently. One breast may swell more, feel more uncomfortable, or have a different initial shape. After complete healing, they will look remarkably similar and natural. You must have patience, but if this causes concern, contact your doctor immediately.

9. Massage: Whenever a foreign body enters your body such as a splinter or a breast implant, your body will form a capsule around the implant. This is completely normal. However, if this capsule thickens it can lead to discomfort and ultimate breast deformity, called capsular contracture. As early as 1 week following surgery, you should initiate capsular contracture prophylaxis exercises by massaging your breasts. You should perform these exercises for the first six months following surgery. Please ask your doctor to demonstrate these message techniques so that you perform them effectively.

10. Activities: Any type of strenuous activity can induce swelling and bleeding, especially during the first 10-14 days after surgery. In general, guide your activities by your discomfort – that is, if an activity hurts, do not do it. If your job keeps you sedentary, you may feel well enough to return to work within 7-10 days. If the swelling or discomfort increases, you have probably done too much too soon. **In general, you should avoid strenuous activities for at least 4 weeks.**

11. **Postoperative visits:** The doctor should examine you within the first week after surgery. At this visit, your doctor will demonstrate and expect you to initiate capsular contracture prophylaxis exercises. You will return to your doctor's office either weekly or at one month at the latest in order to ensure that your implants are in the appropriate position. At your one-month visit, your doctor will remove your Steri-Strips and allow you to return to full physical activity and wearing of normal undergarment/bra wear. Port site (incisions from which liposuction is performed) stitches are typically internal and will dissolve on their own. Often, Steri-Strips are used to cover port site incisions and these should be kept in place for 4 weeks following surgery.

Pt Name: _____

Pt Signature: _____

Date: _____