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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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Long Term Post-Operative Instructions for Double Incision and PERI Mastectomy

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW!!!

Drain Sites:

- After the drains are removed, there will be a small opening in the skin.
- You may have drainage from these sites for several days before they close. This is normal. Usually it takes 5-7 days for the holes to close up.
- Apply bacitracin ointment to the drain site twice daily for the first week after drains are pulled.
- Do not use deodorant until the drain sites are healed, usually 5-7 days after the drains are pulled.

Vest:

- The vest should be worn 23 out of a 24-hour day for the first 10 days following your post-op visit.
- Take it off only to shower or washing the vest. You can put the vest in the washer and dryer on gentle cycle.
- If the vest feels loose, add extra padding.
- When doing your dressing changes, it is much easier for the patient to lay flat in bed and open vest. (Do Not take vest completely off)

Chest Incisions for DI Patients:

- Your incisions are closed securely with absorbable sutures under your skin. The steri strips on the skin are only a dressing.
- THE STERI STRIPS MUST BE REMOVED REGARDLESS AT 2 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY.
- The chest incisions DO NOT need bacitracin ointment. Once the steri strips are off, begin to massage the incisions 2 times a day gently with moisturizer.
- Massage gently at first and increase pressure as you are less tender.
- You may use any moisturizer. Dr. Medalie recommends Aveeno with Oatmeal, Eucerin, Cetaphil and Cerave.
- There may be residual skin glue on incisions. The glue will loosen from the oils on your skin. DO NOT PULL THE GLUE OFF!!!

Nipple/Areolar Grafts:

- The grafts have an absorbable suture that is visible. This will come off in the first 1-2 weeks. DO NOT PULL OFF ANY AREOLAR GLUE!
- Nipples will change colors as they heal (this is normal).

Dressing Changes Starting Day 1 After Drains Removed:

- You will need to do dressing changes twice a day for the next 10 days.
- Remove old dressing, apply bacitracin ointment gently but generously to nipple and drain sites. Then apply the non-adherent (telfa pads) to nipple area. Cover with ABD dressings and then vest. This is to be performed twice a day for 10 days after post-op visit.

Dressing Changes Starting After 10 Days After Drains Removed:

- Dress the graft twice a day with a thick coat of Vaseline and cover with non-adherent pad. You may use medical tape (paper tape) to hold the telfa in place. This is to be performed twice a day for 10 days.
- **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WEAR THE VEST AFTER THE FIRST 10 DAYS.**
- Please note you can expect clear, red or yellow drainage as the grafts are healing and peeling (this is normal and the nipple pigmentation will regenerate in time). The nipple grafts will peel and blister extensively. After the peeling, the healed grafts will be light pink. Your own pigmentation will take several months to regenerate.
- Once you are done with the bacitracin and then the Vaseline dressings, you can start to gently moisturize and gently massage.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO AVOID FRICTION ON THE GRAFT SITE. PLEASE MAKE SURE THE GRAFT SITES DO NOT DRY OUT FOR THE FIRST MONTH AFTER SURGERY.

Showering:

- You may take a shower after the drains are removed.
- Take a soapy wet wash cloth and gently squeeze the water above the nipple area and let the water and soap run down nipples and chest area. Do not use the wash cloth or sponge on the nipples or incisions. You may gently use your hand for the first month post-op.
- Gently let the shower stream hit your chest (dial down your pressure).
- Use a soap that doesn't irritate your skin.

Activity:

- You may raise your arms up (even over your head) and out on occasion with activities. Do not raise your arms in a repetitive motion.
- **NO LIFTING, PUSHING OR PULLING OVER 10 LBS FOR 8 WEEKS.**
- Do not wear a backpack or anything that will cross over the nipple area for 8 weeks post-op.
- No swimming or hot tub until the graft site is healed; usually 6-8 weeks post-op.
- No lifting weights, pushups, bike riding, jogging/running or any extreme upper body workout for 8 weeks post-op. After 8 weeks, resume activity slowly as you start out. You may walk right after surgery.

Driving:

- No driving after surgery while you are taking pain medication and while drains are still in.
- Dr. Medalie does not have a time limit on when you are able to drive after the drains and pain medication has stopped.
- Please note you must be able to react in a situation if you had to slam on brakes and turn wheel in a hurry without restriction/guarding your chest area. This usually takes 2-3 weeks (you be your own judge).

Scarring:

- Internal and external scars will become thicker, harder and more red for the first three months after surgery. Scars will begin to soften after 3 months.
- Massaging with moisturizer will help soften scars.
- We do not recommend that you spend a lot of money on scar treatments.
- Silicone gel sheets can be used on incisions for 12 hours per day for 6 weeks.

Things to Expect:

- Bruising, numbness and swelling for several weeks or longer.
- Firm, tender lumps around the armpits due to liposuction. This is normal and will improve with massage to the area.
- Intermittent discomfort for the first 8 plus weeks including electric shooting pain is normal (nerves are finding new pathways).

Follow Up:

- Please email Michelle one month frontal picture of entire chest. Do not zoom in.
- If you have any concerns, please take a picture and email it to michelle@clevelandplasticsurgery.com or call the office at 216-393-9924 and press option 2.
- We ask that you contact our office before going to the Emergency Room. We can usually handle any matter you may be experiencing by contacting us first.
- If you need any note for work, school, or FMLA, please email michelle@clevelandplasticsurgery.com the information including dates of start and return.
- Logistics questions, request for insurance letters or gender change letters are best addressed by Valerie, our Practice Manager and Patient Care Coordinator. You can reach her by email at valerie@clevelandplasticsurgery.com or by phone at 216-393-9924 option 1.