

## WHAT TO EXPECT FOLLOWING ABDOMINOPLASTY

### Hospital Stay

- You will likely remain in the hospital for one night following your surgery.
- Before you are discharged from the hospital your pain will be adequately controlled with oral pain medication.
- You will be discharged with drains in place. The nurses will teach you how to empty and record your drain output.

### Activity

- No heavy lifting or sports for 6 weeks. These activities use and twist your abdominal muscles, which increases your risk of an abdominal hernia.
- You may not drive for several weeks until you are comfortable wearing a seatbelt and have been cleared to do so
- Rest and take naps as needed throughout the day. You may feel tired the first few weeks after surgery.
- You may use additional pillows under your legs for support when lying down (you should remain in a Beach chair position) to avoid tension on your incision.
- You may need to ambulate with your legs flexed.
- In order to prevent blood clots it is important to walk around as much as possible following this surgery.

### Pain

- You were likely prescribed pain medications. Take them as needed for pain. As your pain decreases you will be able to decrease the use of the narcotic pain medication and control pain with Tylenol only.
- Please avoid taking NSAIDs such as ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, etc as these can increase your risk of bleeding after surgery.
- If you were prescribed a narcotic pain medication, it can cause constipation. In order to avoid constipation, increase your fluid intake you may also need to take a stool softener such as Colace or any of the other over the counter stool softeners.
- Do not drive or drink alcohol while taking pain medication as it can make you drowsy and impair your judgment.

### Diet/Appetite

- You may resume your pre-hospital diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids, at least eight glasses of 8 ounces each day to help prevent constipation associated with pain medication.

#### Caring for Your Wound:

- It is normal to have some bruising and swelling for a few days after surgery.
- You may shower, but do not soak or take a bath for 2 weeks after surgery, unless told otherwise by your surgeon.
- You may have steri-strips on your incision. These can get wet in the shower. They will start to dry and peel off on their own in the next 7-14 days. If they have not fallen off after that time you may remove them yourself.
- If your wound has oozing or drainage, you may cover it with a dry dressing. Please be sure to change it everyday.
- If you were provided with an abdominal binder in the hospital, please continue to wear this at all times except while showering. You should continue wearing the binder for one month.
- Please attach the drains to a belt or necklace made from string, so that they do not pull on your skin while taking a shower. The nurse will review how to do this prior to discharge.

#### Medications

- Resume your pre-hospital medications. Follow-up with your primary care physician regarding new prescriptions or refills of your home medications.
- If you were given an antibiotic, continue to take it until all of your drains are removed. Do not stop taking the antibiotic just because you feel better.

#### Follow-Up Appointment

- If you are not given a follow up appointment when you leave the hospital, call the surgeon's office and make an appointment to be seen within 1 week after your surgery.
- At this appointment, we will check your incision and remove any drains and/or stitches. Your surgeon will also discuss the results of the surgery and your treatment plan.

#### Call the Office if:

- You have a fever greater than 101°F, chills, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, leg pain, increased incisional pain not relieved with pain medication; if you notice signs of wound infection (redness/tenderness at or purulent discharge from your incision); or if you have other concerns.
- Please call 911 or go to the closest Emergency Department for any life threatening emergencies.

