



*My* BREAST CANCER *Doc*

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## **Mastectomy Post-Operative Instructions (Includes Goldilocks Mastectomy)**

### ***Medications and Pain Management:***

Restart all your medications unless told otherwise

You may take Tylenol 325 mg, 1-3 tabs, every 6 hours and or Ibuprofen 200 mg, 1-3 tabs every 6 hours (with food).

If these medications do not control your pain, take the prescribed Percocet every 6 hours as needed.

Percocet may cause constipation which may be helped by drinking water or taking an over-the-counter stool softener.

Ice packs may help with pain and swelling and can be used every 3-4 hours for ten minutes at a time. Avoid heat or warm compresses.

You may experience a sore throat from the breathing tube used in the operating room- lozenges or throat spray may help

### ***Incision and Dressing Care:***

Your incision, or scar, has both stitches and steristrips, which are small white strips of tape, and is covered by a gauze dressing and tape or a plastic dressing.

**Do not remove the dressing, steristrips or stitches.** We will remove the dressing in seven to 10 days. We also will remove the sutures in one to two weeks unless they absorb on their own. If the dressing or steristrips fall off, do not attempt to replace them.

You will have a drain after your surgery. This drain is a plastic tube from under the skin to outside your body with a bulb attached to it. Empty the drain two to three times per day or when the bulb is full. Write down the amount drained on a sheet of paper. Your nurse will teach you how to empty your drain. An information sheet on drains is also separately available under postoperative instructions on our website. You may shower 24 hours after your drain is removed in the office.

**Activity:**

Avoid strenuous activity, heavy lifting and vigorous activity for at least 2 weeks after surgery.

Walking is a normal activity that can be restarted right away.

You cannot do housework or driving until the drain is out. You may restart driving when you are no longer on narcotics, and you feel safe turning the wheel and stopping quickly.

Following lymph node surgery, don't avoid using your arm, but don't exercise it until your first post-operative visit.

You will be given exercises to regain movement and flexibility. You may be referred to physical therapy for additional rehabilitation if it is needed.

Most people return to work within three to six weeks. Return to work varies with your type of work, your overall health, and personal preferences. Discuss returning to work with us.

**Diet:**

You may resume your regular diet as soon as you can take fluids after recovering from anesthesia.

We encourage eight to 10 glasses of water and non-caffeinated beverages per day, plenty of fruits and vegetables as well as lower fat foods. Talk with us about recommendations for healthy eating.

A nutritionist is available for consultation in the Breast Care Center. Call the front desk to schedule an appointment.

**Follow-Up Care:**

The pathology results from your surgery should be available at your first post-operative visit.

Follow-up appointments are generally made before surgery with your physician and a nurse within one week of surgery. Your drain is typically removed in 7 to 14 days after surgery in the office. Dr. Schwartz does not usually use any sutures that require removal in the office. Call the office if you do not have or remember your appointment.

Your dressing will be changed or removed at your post-operative visit.

***When to Contact Us:***

Contact us for the following problems or any unanswered questions. Call the office to speak with a nurse during the day, or in the evening to reach your doctor or the doctor on call:

Pain that is not relieved by medication

Fever more than 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or chills

Excessive bleeding, such as a bloody dressing

Excessive swelling

Redness outside the dressing

Discharge or bad odor from the wound

Allergic or other reactions to medication(s)

Constipation