



My BREAST CANCER *Doc*

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Muscle-Sparing Latissimus Dorsi Reconstruction Post-Operative Instructions

Please call the answering line 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and request to speak to Dr. Schwartz if the following instructions do not answer your questions.

You may have had this surgery at the time of your mastectomy, partial mastectomy or after your cancer surgery was performed a while ago. You may also have an implant in place with your flap.

There will be drains placed in your breast and back. These will be removed in the office 7-21 days after 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 in milliliters (ml). 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 last drain is removed in the office.

You will have black nylon sutures in your back incision. You may leave these uncovered after Dr. Schwartz takes your dressing off during your first follow up appointment. Sutures are typically removed in the office three weeks after surgery.

You will experience discomfort for a day or two that can be controlled with the prescribed pain medication. You should never attempt to drive when taking pain medication. Motion may be painful for several days.

You will have a follow-up appointment scheduled in approximately one week after surgery. You will leave your dressings in place until then and sponge bath only.

Swelling and skin discoloration will subside in the first 2-3 weeks after surgery. Return to normal activity will depend on how you heal and how you feel. You will be up soon after surgery, but you should refrain from excessive movement and lifting more than 10 pounds for 4 weeks following

surgery. Walking is very good for you, and you should walk several times a day. You may feel tightness in your back for several months after surgery.

You can expect itching, and perhaps some occasional sharp shooting pains over the sides of your breasts and back for 4-6 weeks.

NO SMOKING FOR 4 WEEKS BEFORE AND 6 WEEKS after surgery. Smoking reduces the blood supply to your skin and impairs your body's ability to heal.

No heavy exercise or heavy lifting for 4-6 weeks after surgery. We are pleased if you feel great after surgery and want to jump right back in the swing of things, but **DON'T DO IT!** Heavy lifting and exercise increase the pressures in your vessels and may cause you to bleed.

DO NOT take aspirin or aspirin products, Vitamin E, diet pills or herbal medications such as St. John's Wort for 14 days before or one month after surgery. This includes Motrin, Advil, Alleve and Ibuprofen. Tylenol is OK. If you take aspirin as prescribed by another physician, please call our office to discuss exceptions

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 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