

BREAST IMPLANT SURGERY

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

General Instructions

- Please contact us for any serious change in your symptoms, or any new symptoms of concern.
- Walk on the evening of surgery. You will need assistance when walking at first to prevent falls.
- Walk gently for 15-20 minutes, 5-6 times per day starting on post-operative day 1.
- Practice deep breathing exercises 10 times a day. Do not smoke.
- Drink water to stay hydrated.
- You must rest for the first week after surgery, but you should not be on strict bed rest.
- Please review and initial the Breast Implant Check List.

Medication Instructions

- Take medications as prescribed. You will be prescribed an antibiotic.
- Over the counter Tylenol is recommended as the primary pain relief medication. Please check the label on your bottle to remain aware of dosages. No more than 3 grams of Tylenol should be taken in a 24-hour period.
- Opioids can be used for breakthrough pain and should be weaned in the first week after surgery. Many patients only require Tylenol, but every patient is different. Complying with the general post-operative instructions will help with pain control as well.
- You may develop constipation when taking opioid pain medications. You should continue drinking plenty of fluids. Take Colace or Senna twice a day starting on post-operative day 1. You may take your preferred over the counter bowel regimen as well. You should have regular bowel movements. You should avoid straining, which can be avoided with hydration and stool softeners.
- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while taking any opioid pain medication. In general, you should not drive a care for at least 10-14 days after surgery, regardless of pain medication.
- Use caution with opioid medications as they have addictive potential. Do not use other sedative medications, sleep aids, or alcohol in the post-operative setting.

Wound Care and Dressings

- You may take a bath or shower 72 hours after surgery. You should keep your back towards the shower head, but you may let the water gently run over your chest from the back. Do not rub or scrub near the incision lines. If there are steri-strips or skin glue on your incision, it may get wet in the shower, but do not peel it off. Do not remove the tape/glue over the incision lines. The shower may be lukewarm, but not hot. Limit your shower to less than 10 minutes. Then, gently pat dry and place gauze over the breasts to prevent rubbing of incision lines. Then, replace the surgical bra. The surgical bra may be hand washed if needed.
 - You may also sponge bathe in the shower if that is more convenient.
 - Do not immerse yourself or soak in a bathtub.
- No pools, hot tubs, or submerging in bodies of water for 4 weeks.
- After your first follow up visit, you may transition to a standard, comfortable sports bra that closes in the front.

Activity

- You should let others tend to you in the first few days after surgery. You may need assistance with household tasks, driving, running errands, or childcare.
- Walking daily is essentially for well-being, the prevention of blood clots, and lung health.
- Gently ease into your daily activities after the first 7-10 days.
- Do not lift over 5 lbs for 3 weeks.
- No strenuous activity or exercise for 6 weeks. No running, biking, lifting weights, contact sports, swimming, tennis, golfing, etc.
- Sleep on your back, with your back elevated to ~45 degrees on a few pillows for 1 week after surgery. Do not sleep on your stomach for 4 weeks. If you are a side sleeper, a soft pillow under your mid-back and shoulders may offer more comfort and support than a single pillow under your head

Diet

- Eat a well-balanced diet in the weeks following surgery. More bland diets can prevent any post-procedural nausea, vomiting, or constipation.
- Be sure to drink at least 6 glasses of water daily. Stick to non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free, and green tea-free beverages, such as water, fruit juices, milk, and yogurt drinks.
- Do not drink alcohol for at least 7 days after surgery.

Recovery

- Most patients take at least 14 days off work for recovery. This time varies by specific occupational demands. Some patients take up to 4-6 weeks off work.
- Most of the bruising and swelling will subside in 4-6 weeks.
- The implants typically begin to settle within 6 weeks. They may feel high and tight during the first several weeks.
- Your breasts or nipples may have increased or decreased sensitivity after surgery, typically improving over 4-6 months.
- Scars may be raised, bumpy, dark in color or pink for 6 months. In time, these usually soften and fade. Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.

Call us if...

- If you are unable to keep fluids or medications down due to vomiting.
- If you have shaking chills, fever greater than 101.5 (F) or 38 (C), increased redness, swelling or discharge from incision, chest pain, shortness of breath, or anything else that is troubling you.
- If you have questions outside clinic hours, call the main hospital line 617-667-7000 and ask to speak with the plastic surgery team.

Follow Up

- Your first clinic follow-up after surgery will be 1-2 weeks after surgery. If you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call the clinic to schedule an appointment. After the first visit, you will be scheduled for regular follow up visits to monitoring recovery.
- The Plastic Surgery Clinic phone number is: **617-632-7827**

Recommended items to obtain before your surgery day...

- Tylenol
- Miralax or other bowel regimen to have on hand if you develop constipation
- Sterile gauze or “abdominal pads” to apply around your incisions (available at standard drugstore)
- Well balanced diet including vegetables and protein for the healing period
- Non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free beverages, such as water, fruit juices, milk, and yogurt drinks
- Ensure you have clean, comfortable bedding, pillows, and towels on hand.
- Comfortable, loose-fitting, button-up or zip-front tops to be worn to wear to the hospital on your surgery day as well as during the post-operative period. Loose fitting, comfortable pants.
- Consider obtaining a comfortable sports bra that closes in the front. Be sure the elastic band is not too tight and does not “ride-up”, which can affect the healing of your incisions. Many patients order several on Amazon and then return the ones that do not fit properly. However, we will also provide you with a surgical bra on the day of surgery and a new one at your first follow up visit.



