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# Postoperative Instructions

**LIPOSUCTION - LIPOSHAPING**

Liposuction is generally an outpatient procedure.

Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.

Get plenty of rest; follow balanced diet.

Decreased activity and pain medication may promote constipation, so you may want to add more fresh fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.

Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your surgeon.

Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.

If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.

Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

**Activities**

You may shower 48 hours after surgery

Walk as soon as possible, this helps reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.

Do not drive until you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications.

Discuss your time off from work with your surgeon; this varies according to how much liposuction you have. A typical return to work is 1-2 weeks.

Activities involving the affected sites should be minimized for about 2 weeks.

Strenuous exercise and activities such as sports should be avoided for 3-4 weeks, depending on the extent of the surgery.

Physical therapy is not typically necessary after this procedure.

No swimming for 4 weeks.

**Incision Care**

Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.

Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).

Keep dressings in place.

Keep incisions clean, dry and inspect daily for signs of infection.

No tub soaking until two weeks after the incisions are healed and closed.

You will be discharged wearing a pressure garment over the treated area. Most patients will wear pressure garment for 4, sometimes 6 weeks.

Wear pressure garment 24 hours per day and 7 days a week except to shower.

After showering, reapply pressure garment and gauze to cover areas of incisions.

**What To Expect**

The small incision sites will be covered with gauze to protect these areas.

Most of the swelling and discoloration usually subsides in 6-8 weeks, but some

may persist for 3-6 months or more.  
Expect temporary numbness, bruising, swelling, and soreness, burning sensation, bleeding, pain and discomfort.  
May have fluid drainage from incision sites. This is normal.  
You might feel stiff and sore for a few days.  
It is normal to feel a bit anxious or depressed in the days or weeks following surgery; but generally, after about a week, you should begin to feel better.  
Bruising may be apparent beyond the areas of liposuction, partially due to gravity.  
You will have small incision at the access sites for the procedure. Each of these may have one or no sutures.  
A healthy diet and regular exercise helps to maintain your new figure.  
Liposuction is not a substitute for weight loss and does not prevent weight gain.  
Liposuction is a shaping procedure. Do not expect to lose weight from the procedure.

**Follow-Up Care**

Any sutures are removed 7-10 days after surgery.

**When To Call**

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.

**For Medical Questions, Please Call:**

(615) 921-2100 Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-5:00 PM and Fridays 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM. After hours and on weekends, the answering service will contact Dr. Wendel or the plastic surgeon on call.