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Postoperative Instructions

ABDOMINOPLASTY (TUMMY TUCK)

This is an outpatient surgery.

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 drink plenty of fluids.

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

Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medication.

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

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

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

Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms.

No lifting greater than 10 lbs. for 3-4 weeks.

Resume sexual activity as comfort permits, usually 2-3 weeks after surgery.

Avoid straining of abdominal muscles. No strenuous activity or exercise for 4-6 weeks.

No swimming for 6 weeks.

Return to work in 2 weeks.

Physical therapy is not typically necessary after this procedure.

Incision Care

You may shower 48 hours after removal of all drainage tubes.

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 steri-strips in place.

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

No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place.

Wear your compression garment 24/7 for 4 weeks.

Place clean, dry dressings over incisions and around drain sites to wick away moisture and to prevent irritation from garment along the incision line.

Sleep with head elevated and pillows under your knees for comfort and to decrease pulling on your incision.

What to Expect

You may experience temporary pain, soreness, or numbness of the abdominal skin and incision discomfort.

Maximum discomfort will occur the first few days.

You will have bruising and swelling of the abdomen. The majority of bruising and swelling will subside in 4-6 weeks.

You may feel tired for several weeks.

Appearance

Flatter, firmer abdomen with narrower waistline.

You will walk slightly bent forward and gradually return to normal posture over next 1-2 weeks.

Scars will be reddened for 6 months. After that, they will gradually fade and soften.

The scar will extend from near one hipbone to the other, low on the abdomen.

Follow-Up Care

Abdominal drains are removed when less than 30mL/day for 2 days.

The sutures used for your surgery dissolve and do not need to be removed.

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.