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Postoperative Instructions

ARM LIFT (BRACHIOPLASTY)

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 4 weeks.

Social activities can be resumed 10-14 days after surgery.

Avoid strenuous activity or exercise for 4-6 weeks.

No swimming for 4 weeks.

Return to work in 1-2 weeks.

Physical therapy is not typically necessary after this procedure.

Incision Care

If drainage tube(s) have been placed, you may shower 48 hours after removal.

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.

What to Expect

Postoperative pain is minimal.

Your arms will be wrapped with ace wraps or a compression garment immediately after surgery.

You will need to wear this garment for approximately 2-4 weeks after surgery.

Some swelling and bruising is expected.

There may be numbness around the operative areas.

Appearance

There will be a scar in the underarm area; this scar will be hidden when arm is

against body.

If the incision extends down to and around elbow, a scar may be visible.

Follow-Up Care

Drains (if used) 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.