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# Postoperative Instructions

## **NIPPLE AREOLA COMPLEX (NAC) RECONSTRUCTION**

Nipple Areola Complex (NAC) reconstruction is done about 3 months after breast mound reconstruction. The nipple and areola reconstruction are done together as an outpatient procedure. Patients may return to work in 5-7 days.

When you wake up from surgery you may have a bolster or silicone shield over your nipple graft. A bolster looks like an old-fashioned pincushion. It is yellow. The bolster is sutured to your breast and must be kept clean and dry. The silicone shield is a white disk. The purpose of the bolster or shield is to hold the areola skin graft in place. You do nothing to this area until your first follow-up appointment. The appointment will be 5-7 days after your procedure. The nurse or medical assistant will remove your bolster. Sutures around the areola may be left in for another week. You will be given instructions to care for your new nipple and areola until your next follow-up appointment. At the second follow-up visit, the rest of your sutures and steri-strips will be removed.

You may shower after the bolster is removed. No hot tubs, swimming or baths for 6 weeks. Do not allow water from the shower to directly hit the breast. The shower water may be directed on your back. You may shower with mild soap and water. Allow your nipples to air dry. Completely cover areola and nipple with Xeroform gauze covered with a dry gauze, and tape securely. You may start wearing a bra. Physical therapy is not typically necessary for this procedure.

Reconstruction of the areola is most often achieved with a full-thickness skin graft. Donor sites include the following:

- The TRAM or DIEP abdominal donor incision
- Medial thigh
- Breast Mastectomy scar

These donor sites will have a steri-strip over the incision. Leave the steri-strip in place until you return to clinic. Sutures used for this donor area are dissolvable. You may remove the gauze dressing after 48 hours.

**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.