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# Recovery 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 a 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.

Prior to your surgery, pain medication will be prescribed by Dr. Wendel and sent in electronically to your pharmacy.

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 10lbs. 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 submerging incisions under any type of water including but not limited to the ocean, pools, hot tubs, and baths 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.

You may sponge bathe up until this time.

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 and/or surgical glue 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.

You may remove surgical garment(s) to sponge bathe and/or shower.

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.

After having surgery, it is expected you will experience some pain and discomfort even with pain medications. This is a normal part of recovery.

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 the 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.

Drain(s) will remain in place for a minimum of 7 days.

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

Staples may be used for your surgery and are typically removed 2-3 weeks after surgery.

Instructions regarding surgical glue removal and scar gel treatment/application will be provided at your post op appointment.

### **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

### **Managing Refill Prescriptions**

For prescription refills, please contact our office during business hours (615) 921-2100 Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: We are unable to refill pain medication of any kind after hours or on weekends.

Messages received after hours or on weekends will be processed the next business day.

### **For Medical Questions, Please Call:**

(615) 921-2100 Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. After hours and on weekends, the answering service will contact Dr. Wendel or the plastic surgeon on call.