



## Abdominoplasty Post-Op Instructions

1. Arrange to have someone at home with you during the first **24 hours** post-operatively and have them **review** these instructions. You may need assistance for the first few days.
2. **After 24 hours, you may remove the dressings and garment to shower.** You may throw away the gauze and xeroform in your belly button, but leave the tape on the incision until your one week follow up appointment. Pat the tape dry after showering or use a hair dryer on a cool setting to help dry the tape. Replace the binder **firmly** after showering to support the abdomen. You may wear a soft cotton T- shirt or tank top under the binder to help it from irritating your skin. You may hand wash and air dry the garment. Please rest while washing this. **The binder is to be worn at all times except when showering for 4 weeks.** No soaking in a tub or pool for 3 weeks. **Do not** use any antibiotic ointment on open areas, if questions please call the office.
3. Suction drain catheters have been placed on both sides of the abdomen. These will stay in place for 7 to 14 days. You will be given a form in recovery room to document the amount of drainage from the drains. **Please bring this form with you to your one week follow up appointment.** You may place gauze or pads around the drain sites to aid in comfort.
4. We want you to **rest** as much as possible the first week, but do not lay in bed for extended periods of time. Get up and walk around the house every 2 hours to improve circulation. Roll ankles in circles and flex toes back and forth while resting to help circulation. It is important to stay well hydrated. For the first week, stay slightly bent forward at the waist when up walking. When resting, stay in a flexed “V” position with pillows under your knees and back or in a recliner.
5. **No strenuous activity, lifting over 20 pounds, or bending/twisting much at the waist for 4 weeks.** You may return to a desk type job after 2 weeks. The more active you are, the longer the healing process will be. It will take 3-6 months for all the swelling to go away.
6. **NO SMOKING FOR AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE AND 2 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY.** This will slow your healing process and increase your risk of complications and poor wound healing.
7. You may experience **moderate pain** for 1-2 weeks. You have been given a prescription for narcotic pain medication to take **as needed.** You may take **1 pain pill every 4 hours or 2 pain pills every 6 hours as needed for pain with food; DO NOT take these with Tylenol.** These medications may make you drowsy. Do not drive a car while taking these. **Do not take Advil/Motrin/Aspirin/Aleve/Excedrin for 3 days. After 3 days, you can take Ibuprofen (Motrin) 600mg- 800mg every 8 hours as needed for pain with food.** Do not take Ibuprofen if you have an allergy to NSAIDS, have stomach ulcers, or kidney disease. You will also be given an antibiotic to take for 7 days. Ice may be used for swelling and discomfort as needed for the first 4 days (20 minutes on and 20 minutes off).
8. You may experience nausea. Crackers, toast, and other bland foods are recommended to be eaten first, advance your diet as tolerated. A well balanced diet is important for the healing process. **If your nausea is severe and you are unable to keep any fluids or medications down, please contact Dr. Robbins.** You may also experience constipation from the pain medication. Try



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eating high fiber foods and drinking lots of water. You may also use OTC remedies such as laxatives, fiber, stool softeners, or enemas as needed.

**9. \*\*\* Please have whoever is caring for you read these instructions\*\*\***

If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call us! Office hours are M-F 8am- 5pm. After hours and weekends, please call **515-221-9999**, and Dr. Robbins will return your call.