

Patient Name: _____ Date: _____

POSTOPERATIVE BREAST REDUCTION/LIFT INSTRUCTIONS

HEALING PROCESS

The healing process following breast reduction surgery varies with each person. Some common themes that patients have shared with us include:

- **The need for rest.** For the first 10 days you should expect to be tired. We suggest that you rest often during the day and get good nights sleep.
- **The need for comfort.** You will receive a prescription for pain medication and we encourage you to take it as prescribed. "Shooting pains" and "Burning sensations" are normal and will subside as you heal during the next few weeks. We will give you a support bra to wear day and night. DO NOT wear underwire bras.
- **The need to know.** The healing is a process occurring over time. The plastic surgery team will closely follow your healing. Some breast swelling is normal. Your breasts will take about 6 months to acquire their new shape. The scars will lighten and become less apparent during this time.

BATHING AND DRESSING

- You may shower the day after your drains are removed. You may gently wash your breasts as you begin to shower with soap and water.
- Change wound dressings every day, after you begin showering. Dressings are no longer required if there is no staining.
- Some pinkish, reddish or clear yellow staining of the dressing to be expected in the first 1-2 weeks.
- If you have small adhesive strips (steri-strips) on, or are taped directly to your skin, leave them in place until they fall off. Pat dry after showering.
- Apply prescribed ointment to all suture lines as directed.
- DO NOT use over-the-counter lotions, solutions, or herbal preparations unless instructed to do so by your doctors.
- DO NOT apply a heating pad to your breasts, this may cause a burn.

If you have: nausea, **vomiting, dizziness, significant bleeding or pain and swelling** which increase rather than decrease, call **Dr. Olding at 202-741-3241** or the plastic surgery fellow on call at 202-715-4141.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINE (First Six Weeks)

- DO NOT drive a motor vehicle for 5-7 days or while taking narcotic pain medication.
- DO NOT smoke. Smoking delays healing.
- DO NOT do strenuous activities (such as running or aerobics) for 2 weeks.
- You may resume walking at a gentle pace when it feels comfortable to do so.
- NO heavy lifting (no more than 5 lbs.) or bending the first 2 weeks.
- AVOID sexual activity for at least 2 weeks.
- If it hurts, don't do it.
- You may return to work in 1 to 2 weeks, depending on your work activity.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS**1. First Clinic Appointment**

- You must have someone stay with you for the first 24 hours.
- Your first clinical VISIT WILL BE THE FOLLOWING MORNING; USUALLY DRAINS WILL BE REMOVED WITHIN 1-3 DAYS.
- Please record drainage from drains and bring record sheet to the appointment.

2. Second Clinic Appointment

- The second clinic appointment with your doctor is usually within ten days. Ask the doctor or nurse about any questions or concerns you may have.

3. Third Clinic Appointment

- The next clinic appointment is 14-21 days after surgery (sooner if needed).
- Follow up appointment will be scheduled at: 4-6 weeks or 3 months or 6 months.

INFECTION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

1. Temperature over 100 Degrees.
2. Reddened suture lines.
3. Increased pain/discomfort.
4. Yellow pus-like or foul smelling drainage larger than dime size from the incisions or drain sites.

Contact your physician right away if any of these occur, by calling: (202) 741-3241.

On weekends or after hours, please contact 202-715-4141 and ask for the plastic surgery fellow on call.

Occasionally an area of redness and tenderness develops, where a dissolving stitch becomes irritated. If this occurs, it is not an emergency. Please call our office for an appointment with a nurse at your convenience.