

Pioneer Valley Plastic Surgery, LLC

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Post-Operative Instructions for Mastectomy

There may be information here that contradicts information on the general Post-Operative Instructions sheet. Any time this occurs, follow these procedure specific instructions. If you have any questions, please call the office at (413) 731-7877.

- Minimal activities for the first 4 days after surgery.
- Sleep on back for first 2 weeks.
- You may ice your chest for the first week to decrease swelling and pain. Avoid heat to prevent a burn to the skin.
- While drains are in you may sponge bath only.
- You may change the gauze dressings as needed. You can use ABD pads, maxi pads, or nursing pads.
- Open binder daily and change out any soiled dressings. Empty drain bulbs twice a day or as needed. If drains not holding suction, it is OK.
- Do not raise arms above shoulders.
- NO heavy lifting (greater than 15 pounds), pushing or pulling for 4 weeks after surgery.
- NO driving or working while on pain medications.
- You may take Tylenol for pain or Benadryl for itching if needed.
- Avoid Advil, Motrin, or Ibuprofen for the first week after surgery but you may take them any time after the 1st week.

After drain removal:

- Apply bacitracin ointment and gauze to nipple grafts for 2 weeks
- Apply bacitracin ointment and gauze to drain site until closes up (about 1 week)
- Wear binder for 2 more weeks
- No swimming until incisions are completely healed and closed-up (about 4 weeks)
- You may shower after drains are removed. Remove gauze before shower and then replace.
- You may have sexual relations in 4 weeks
- No tattoo or piercings to the chest area for 1 year (other parts of the body, 6 wks after surgery)
- OK to sleep on your side once drains are removed
- OK to use deodorant once drains are removed

You can expect:

- Sutures to be removed between 10-14 days after surgery if they are not dissolvable.
- Drains will be in for 1-2 weeks after surgery.
- To return to non-strenuous work within 3-7 days.
- Moderate discomfort which should be relieved with pain medications.
- Moderate swelling of chest and abdomen.
- Bruising around chest.
- Some bloody or clear drainage on dressings for the first week after surgery. Wear pad to keep clothes clean.

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Call the office if you experience:

- Severe pain not relieved by pain medications.
- Increased swelling or firmness greater on one side than the other.
- Excessive drainage on dressings that is increasing.
- Incisions that appear to be opening.
- Any red, hot, or pus containing areas.
- A fever greater than 101.5
- Call the office at any time with questions.

As time goes by and you are healing, the following apply:

- Most swelling, bruising and soreness resolves within 6-8 weeks.
- Return to strenuous activities in 8 weeks.
- The scar will continue to fade for up to 2 years.

Some supplies that may be helpful to purchase prior to surgery:

- 1 box of gauze pads, maxi pads, or nursing pads for dressing changes
- 1 bottle of antibacterial soap
- 1 roll of paper tape
- 1 tube of bacitracin ointment

****We require 48 hours for prescription refills. Please call in advance.**