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BREAST SURGERY
POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Your greatest discomfort will be within the first 24-48 hours after your operation. During this time, take your prescribed pain medication according to the instructions on the bottle. It is helpful to take the pain medication with crackers or toast to avoid nausea that may occur if taken on an empty stomach. After the first 24-48 hours, your discomfort should be decreasing and the pain medications should be taken less frequently and only if needed.

Diet: Easily digested food such as ginger ale, jello, and canned soups are usually tolerated well during the first 24 hours after your operation. If you have no nausea, you may resume your usual diet.

REMEMBER to avoid aspirin, Aleve, Ibuprofen, Motrin, and Advil, for 2 weeks after your operation. Tylenol is fine.

DRESSINGS

1. Your dressing may consist of tapes or clear skin glue over the incision. Please leave this in place until returning to the office. You may shower with this dressing. If skin glue is present it may be removed in the shower 2 weeks after your surgery.
2. A bra is not necessary unless specifically instructed by your doctor. You may wear one if you feel more comfortable with the added support.
3. Special instructions will be given to you by your doctor if you have any kind of dressing of drainage apparatus other than those mentioned above.

ACTIVITY

1. You may shower the day after surgery. Have someone help you with showers, etc. when you are taking pain medication.
2. You may need to stay out of work for 2-3 days after your operation until some of the soreness has subsided. This is especially important if your job requires lifting and/or vigorous activity.
3. Limit your arm use to routine daily activities such as brushing your teeth, eating, and combing or shampooing your hair. Avoid vigorous arm motion that requires pushing, pulling, and lifting heavy objects over 10 pounds.
4. As you heal and the soreness subsides, let pain be the limiting factor. **If it hurts, don't do it.**
5. Check with your surgeon before you resume jogging, aerobics, or any vigorous exercise program. Usually, all physical activities may be resumed by 3 weeks post-operatively.

6. Driving: If you are not taking pain medication, you may drive a car (preferably an automatic transmission) 4-5 days post-op. If it hurts, don't drive! Please exercise caution and good judgment in this matter.
7. Sleep: Avoid sleeping on your abdomen until all soreness has subsided. You may find greater comfort sleeping on 2-3 pillows.
8. Please avoid tub baths and hot tubs until your surgeon sees you on your return post-op visit.

What to expect: You can expect to have some breast soreness, swelling, and bruising. You may also notice drainage on your dressing for a few days. This will subside in about 48 hours.

Rarely are there major complications following breast surgery, but you should contact your physician if you have:

1. Severe pain not responding to the prescribed pain medication taken as directed.
2. Excessive amount of pain and swelling in one or both breasts especially if accompanied by redness, warmth, and hardness.
3. Thick, odorous drainage and bleeding that does not subside.
4. Elevated temperature of 101 degrees F or greater.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PROBLEMS, OR AN EMERGENCY, PLEASE
CALL 410-427-5555.**

Pain medications may cause constipation. You may take an over the counter stool softener, i.e. Metamucil, Surfak, Colace, or Docusate to avoid constipation. Take 1 stool softener a day as needed along with pain medication.

We recommend Florastor to be taken once a day as long as you are on Antibiotics; this is available over-the-counter.