



## Discharge Instructions for Breast Surgery Patients

**Office Visit:** Call the office soon to make an appointment for 3-4 days after surgery.

**Diet:** No restrictions.

### Wound Care:

Mastectomy Patients:

- Please leave the pressure dressing (ace wrap or post-op bra) on for 3 days. The dressing will be removed in the office. Sponge-bathe until the dressing is removed. Showers are fine after the dressing is removed.

Lumpectomy and sentinel lymph node biopsy / axillary dissection patients:

- Keep the incisions dry for 24 hours. Showers or sponge baths are fine.
- You may remove the bandages over the incisions after 24 hour. Leave the steri-strip tapes on for once week. You may leave them off if they fall off below that time.
- You should wear a supportive (sports) bra unless you find it uncomfortable. A light gauze dressing may be tucked inside your bra to decrease irritation of the incision. Avoid tape where possible.

Lumpectomy with temporary balloon catheter for short-term RTs

- Leave dressing in place until you are evaluated by the radiation therapist.
- You may be placed on antibiotics until the radiation catheter is withdrawn.

**All breast surgery patients should avoid powder, lotion, or deodorant near incisions for one week.**

### Drain Management:

- Support the drain tube and bulb during your shower. You may use a safety pin to hold the bulb up to the taped bandage around the drain site. Do not rely on the suture to hold it in. Reapply a dry gauze dressing around the tube site after your shower.
- Drains are removed in the office after the drainage amount drops to less than 25-30cc per day. The drains are usually removed if drainage persists after 7-10 days to avoid infection.
- The bulbs may need to be emptied 3-4 times a day in order to maintain suction in the drain lube for it to work properly. Carefully record the drainage amount emptied for each day. Please bring the drainage record to the office.
- As the surgical wounds heal, there is likely to be slight swelling, redness, lumpiness, or bruising of the skin which will improve with time.

**Please call the office as soon as possible if any of the following occur:**

- **Sharp increase in pain, redness, or swelling of the incision**
- **Presence of pus drainage or persistent bleeding**
- **Fever over 101°F**

**Activity:** Limit your shoulder movement while the drain(s) are in place. Use the sling during the day. Do not drive until the drain is removed and pain is gone.

**Pain Medication Warning:** You may be prescribed a narcotic for pain relief such as Darvocet, Vicodin, or Percocet. Narcotics can cause drowsiness and constipation. Do not drive a car, work around machines, or drink alcohol while taking narcotics. Drink plenty of liquids and take a stool softener (Colace) to avoid constipation. You may take Milk of Magnesia or a Dulcolax suppository to relieve constipation.

**If you have any questions or problems call the office which is open Monday through Friday 9-5. If necessary, the "on-call" surgeon for the practice can be reached after hours through the answering service.**