

BRACHIOPLASTY AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If you received anesthesia during the procedure, you will be sleepy for the rest of the day and maybe tomorrow. **DO NOT** drive, operate any machinery, or do anything requiring coordination for the rest of the day. Do not sign any legal documents or make any important decisions in the next 24 hours. If you are a smoker, please do not smoke for 2-3wks. It will interfere with wound healing. After anesthesia, you should breathe deeply each waking hour in order to keep the lungs clear.
- On the day of your surgery and during that night, you should have a responsible adult to be with you for your safety. You may need assistance to go to the bathroom.
- Use medications as instructed. Patients may find Tylenol to be adequate to control postoperative discomfort if they prefer not to take any narcotic medications. **DO NOT** take aspirin products or nsaid (e.g. Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, Motrin, Naproxen, Excedrin). If any of these are prescribed to you by another physician, please advise our office.

DIET

- For the first 24 hours after surgery we recommend a light diet. We do not recommend *any alcoholic beverages for 24 hours after your procedure. After that, we do not recommend combining your postoperative pain medication with alcoholic beverages.* After the first 24 hours you may advance to a regular diet as you can tolerate.

YOUR DRESSING

- Please remove dressings after 48 hours. You may resume showering at 48 hours.
- After 48hours you may transition to wearing a compression garment for 3-4wks. You may wash the garment as needed.
- Record JP drain output as instructed if present.
- When you shower, please ensure JP drains are appropriately secured.

THINGS TO HAVE

- Prescription Pain Medication
- Prescription Nausea Medication
- Antibiotics (if needed)
- Stool softener

WOUND CARE

- Wound care is extremely important and can help with healing. Please follow the instructions carefully.
- Keep incision clean and dry.

- Do not apply any lotions or ointments without discussing it with Dr. Patel.
- Shower daily after 48hrs.
- If you have JP drains, please see JP drain care sheet for specific instructions.

WHAT IS NORMAL

- You will probably experience moderate discomfort for 2 to 3 days after surgery.
- Slight oozing of blood or clear fluid from the incision site over the first 2 days.
- Swelling, which is the body's way of healing, can last for several months; the swelling will likely be worse on day 2 or 3 after surgery and then improve significantly over the next several weeks.
- Take comfort in the fact that the "tight" feeling, numbness, bumps and irregularities, are normal after surgery and slowly improve over months.
- The body heals a surgical scar in slow stages. Gradually improving surgical scars and contours can be expected **for up to 1 year after surgery.**

WHAT TO AVOID

- Driving or operating heavy equipment after sedation or while taking prescription pain medication.
- Heavy lifting (greater than 10 pounds) or strenuous activities for 6 weeks.
- Sun exposure; if you must go into the sun, use sunscreen.
- Sleeping flat. Place 2-3 pillows behind head at night as it will help with discomfort.
- Smoking/tobacco as these slow the healing process.

AFTERCARE ACTIVITY

- You may resume showering 2 days after your surgery date.
- The **ONLY** exercise for the first 6 weeks is walking: after 2wks you may resume walking outside with increasing duration.
- You may return to the gym after 6wks doing only one-half of your usual regimen and take 4 weeks to return to your regular regimen. Weight, machines, running, swimming, golf, tennis, yoga, and Pilates after 8 weeks
- Please refrain from sexual activity for 6 weeks.
- For the first 6 weeks lift no more than 10 pounds.
- You may return to sedentary work 2 weeks after your surgery, if you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications.
- Please refrain from driving a car for at least 7-10 days after your surgery date. After 7-10 days you may resume driving if you feel comfortable. Please ensure you are off all narcotic pain medications before resuming driving.

Call Dr. Patel on his cell phone (253)733-7048 if you experience the following:

- Extreme swelling around the surgical area that is very hot, firm, or tense.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.

- If you have any side effects to your medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 101.5 degrees.
- If you have any purulent drainage or notice a foul odor.
- If you have (excessive) bleeding or saturation of the dressing. A small amount of bleeding may appear on the dressing or pad.
- If you have an increase in pain or redness after the first 48 hours.
- If you experience persistent nausea or vomiting.
- If you experience asymmetric arm swelling please contact our office to be evaluated.

If you experience a medical emergency and are unable to reach the doctor on call, go to the nearest emergency room.