

## **ABDOMINOPLASTY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **BEFORE SURGERY**

- Please read all of the information in your pre-op packet three times, immediately after your appointment, the day before surgery, and again after surgery to ensure that you remember the details.
- By planning ahead, you can have a more relaxed recovery phase. Fill your prescriptions, stock the house with comfort foods, arrange a comfortable place to sleep and remember that you will need a ride to the first and second post-op appointment. Do not be alone the night of surgery; plan to have someone stay with you.
- **NO SMOKING** of any kind one month before or after surgery is recommended.
- Start taking Bromelain, Arnica Montana or Arnika Forte as directed.
- Before your surgery, you will need to purchase two Fleet's enemas to administer to yourself the night before and the morning on the day of your surgery. Follow directions on the product box.
- Start Colace 100 mg twice per day and add a dose of fiber (Metamucil, Benefiber or equivalent) to your diet. Starting two weeks before surgery. Continue this until you are off your pain meds and are "regular."

### **THE DAY OF SURGERY**

- Make sure you do not eat, drink, smoke or chew anything except essential medications (as approved by your surgeon) 8 hours prior to surgery. You may take a Dramamine with a small sip of water the morning of surgery.
- Know where to go, when to be there, and please **DO NOT FORGET**
  1. Your pre-op packet
  2. Your garment
- Wear comfortable clothing, preferably something you do not have to pull over your head.
- You will be in the recovery room for about 2 or more hours after surgery, so be sure your ride home understands this time frame.
- The car ride home is usually not the highlight of your day. Sometimes the motion causes you to vomit. If you live hours away you may consider staying in town the first night.
- Once home, find a nice place to settle where you can sleep on your back with the head of the bed elevated about 30 degrees. Keep your medications, fluids and, if necessary, something to throw up into close by. Work on deep breathing to keep your lungs expanded. Start your antibiotics at the next mealtime once at home and all others as needed or as directed.

### **WEEK ONE**

After surgery, you will be "sore" and unable to move very quickly. You may not be able to stand up completely or lie flat in bed immediately. You will have to position yourself in a "jack-knife or beach-chair" position: while lying down, prop both your upper body and your lower legs up on pillows and while standing, bend at the hip joint. You may be more comfortable in a recliner or on the couch right after surgery, but do not lie flat!

There may be two to four drains in your abdomen. You will need to empty and "strip" the tubing of these drains at least every 12 hours and more often if needed. Record the drainage in ml (cc's) as marked on the side of the drain bulb or measuring cup. You will be shown how to manage the drains by a nurse before leaving the hospital. They will be removed when the drainage has decreased to around 20-25 ml (cc's) or less in a 24-hour period.

The hypo-allergenic tape will be left on your incisions for one–two weeks.

DO NOT lift, push, pull or drag anything over about 5 pounds. Don't do anything that will cause you to bounce or be "jarred" excessively. Do not put any pressure on your abdomen. If you have children, this means you will need someone to help you for at least two weeks.

**NO DRIVING** of any type of vehicle is allowed for approximately two weeks or until instructed by us. Driving too soon after surgery can be dangerous to you and to others. You should be comfortable and completely off of pain meds.

You cannot take a tub bath, but a shower is ok unless another procedure forbids it

**DO NOT SMOKE!** The first two weeks after a "tummy tuck" is crucial to healing. Even one cigarette can severely damage the blood flow to your stomach and could possibly cause the area to die and turn black.

Continue wearing your support garment at all times. It is ok to unhook and unzip the garment to aid in breathing exercises.

Take your antibiotics until they are all gone. Take pain medication as needed every 4 to 6 hours. For constipation, you may take a mild laxative, a stool softener or a hot tea called Smooth Move. The products for constipation may be purchased over the counter at any store.

#### WEEK TWO

You should be able to stand upright and lie flat by now. However, if you feel any pain, tugging or pulling, STOP and do not force yourself to straighten out.

Continue, as instructed, to change your wound dressings and to continue wearing your support garment.

You may shower now, but do not sit in a tub of water until we give you clearance to do so.

Continue to RESTRICT HEAVY LIFTING. Lift nothing that weighs over 10 pounds. No driving is advised until week 3 (or until you feel comfortable and are completely off of pain medications).

#### WEEKS THREE TO SIX

You should start going back to normal activities during these weeks. Start slowly and remember not to push yourself.

Continue to RESTRICT LIFTING of heavy objects. You may lift up to about 15 pounds in week three and about 20 pounds in week four.

Continue wearing your support garment until cleared to stop. You may find it more comfortable and supportive to wear a "panty" type girdle after you are finished wearing the garment. A "panty" girdle may be purchased in any department store.

You may begin driving now, but start slowly. Eventually you will be back to your usual routine. We discourage cardio for 6 weeks and weight training for 3 months. All exercises should be done with a controlled tight core. It is easy to gain weight during this time so eat healthy and check your weight regularly.