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*Plastic Surgery*

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**BREAST REDUCTION MAMMOPLASTY**

Pre-operatively :

Visit your general practitioner for a pre-operative check up: Discuss any medications that you are currently taking {including Vitamins}. Some medications increase bleeding and should be avoided for at least ten days before surgery {i.e. Aspirin, Coumadin, Ginger or Ginkgo supplements}

Please consider the following suggestions as they may help you prepare for both your surgery and your recovery period..

**Plan for rest and recovery:** You may tire easily for the first few weeks after surgery and will therefore need plenty of rest. In order to protect incisions and promote healing, **vigorous** activity must be limited for four to six weeks after surgery. {Avoid heavy lifting, stretching and strenuous exercise}. You may need to arrange to have assistance with duties around the house {i.e. lifting children/groceries/vacuuming}. You must have a responsible adult with you for the first 24 hours following surgery. Time off work varies between one and six weeks, depending on occupation. Discuss recommended time off work with Dr. Taylor.

Obtain supplies:

You will need 3x3 or 4x4 non-sterile gauze, available at most pharmacies. Purchase a medium support bra with cup shape and without underwire, with a front closure (if possible) prior to surgery and bring with you to hospital. Choose a size that fits your pre-surgery chest measurement. A suggestion may be the front closure bra at Dawn Fashions (Fort St. in Victoria). Walmart also carries front closure bras.

Day of surgery:

Generally, patients undergoing breast reduction surgery are admitted to hospital on the day of surgery. It is very important that you have nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before surgery. Shower/bath prior to leaving for the hospital. **Bring your bra with you to hospital.** Wearing a shirt that opens in the front may be easiest to put on/take off, as you should **not** be raising your arms above shoulder level. The surgery will be performed under general anaesthetic. A general anaesthetic places you in a deep sleep, therefore preventing you from feeling any sensation of pain or remembering the procedure.

You did receive medicine for sedation therefore; you **MUST NOT** operate motor vehicles, boats, power tools or machinery for the first 24 hours. You **MUST NOT** sign or enter into any legal contracts for 24 hours.

Post-operatively:

Patients may go home the day of or day after surgery. The sutures are under the skin surface and will dissolve themselves. Steri-strips {thin tape across incisions} should be left in place for as long as possible {typically 10 to 14 days}. After approximately two weeks, you can start to gently peel off any remaining Steri-strips. If they fall off within the first seven days, replace them with 3M Micropore tape {available at most pharmacies}.

Dressings:

You will be discharged from hospital with a gauze dressing. You will need to apply clean 4x4 gauze dressings to your incisions every day, for the first 10 to 14 days {i.e. after showering/bathing}. **Do not use Telfa dressings.** This dressing will protect the steristrips from your bra/clothing and will absorb any discharge from the incision. Your incisions may drain small amounts of blood and/or clear fluid for the first few days. Replace wet/soiled gauze as needed {you may need to change the dressing a few times per day}. This dressing can be held in place with your bra. Small gaps/openings in the incision lines may occur; keep these areas clean and dry.

Your bra should be worn both day and night, for the initial two weeks. The bra should then be worn daytime only for the next three weeks. Supporting your breasts with the bra minimizes tenderness and scarring. After three months you may wear a bra with underwire.

Hygiene:

You may shower three days after surgery. Avoid raising your arms to wash your hair. Steristrips remain in place. Avoid using soap on/around sutures lines and use a soft towel to pat dry.

Pain:

Your breasts will be firm, swollen and bruised for several days. Over-the-counter Ibuprofen (starting the day following surgery) may increase the pain relief along with the use of your prescription medication as needed. Sleeping with your arms elevated on pillows minimizes tugging on incisions and may therefore, ease discomfort. Do not use your arms in any way that will engage your chest muscles, for three to six weeks, depending on comfort (i.e. pushing, pulling or reaching activities). Nipples may be numb immediately after surgery and may then become more or less sensitive. Depending on the style of incisions, you may notice puckering at the suture lines. Puckering should resolve within three to four weeks. Approximately two weeks after surgery, when incisions have healed completely, begin gently massaging scars. This may help to reduce both puckering and scarring.

**If any of the following occur please notify Dr. Taylor:**

- Increased pain
- Increased swelling/redness, specifically on one side
- Fever/chills
- Foul odour and/or increased drainage from incisions

Follow-up appointment: A post-operative check-up should be scheduled for ten days after discharge. Call Dr. Taylor's office earlier if unexpected problems/concerns arise.