

## **Instructions for Breast Reconstruction with Latissimus Dorsi Flap or without Breast Implant**

### **PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

- Aspirin - Do not take Aspirin or Aspirin containing compounds for two weeks before or after surgery. Aspirin may cause increased bleeding and bruising. You may take Tylenol.
- Smoking - No smoking for three months before and after surgery. Smoking will result in poor wound healing, additional surgery, and delayed recovery.
- Medications - Notify us if you routinely take any medication. If you are taking medications for any condition (i.e. heart, blood pressure, diabetes, seizures, etc...) please take as usual.
- Illness - If you develop any symptoms of a cold, cough, or infection, call our office for advice.
- Fasting - Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the day before surgery.

### **DAY OF SURGERY**

- Shower and shampoo the morning of surgery and report to the hospital at the designated time.
- Do not bring jewelry or valuables with you.
- Wear loose comfortable clothing. Preferably something that opens in the front (either buttons or zips).
- Someone must drive you home from the hospital. Also, a responsible person should stay with you the first night home.
- Plan to be in the hospital 1-2 nights.

### **POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Rest at home for the first 24 hours after discharge. Sleep on your back with your head on two pillows.
2. You may experience discomfort for the first day or two. A prescription for pain medication will be provided. Do not take the medication on an empty stomach as it may cause nausea.
3. Take all prescribed medications as directed following surgery. Pain medication can cause constipation. Use a stool softener and laxative as needed.
4. Showering and shampooing is allowed as soon as you are home. After the dressings have been removed in the office, wash suture lines daily with soap and water. You may have drainage tubes (one or more) which will be removed when the drainage decreases.
5. Do not apply lotion or Vitamin E to the suture lines. You may be instructed to use Neosporin or Bacitracin ointment on the suture lines.
6. Avoid strenuous exercise such as jogging, running, or aerobics for 3-4 weeks after surgery. Walking is good exercise. You may drive within several days of surgery when you feel comfortable and in control of the vehicle. You may resume sexual activity when you feel it is appropriate.
7. Your sutures will dissolve on their own and do not need to be removed. You will be given scar instructions 2-3 weeks after surgery.

8. You may experience some bloody drainage from your incisions. Use gauze pads, sanitary pads, or nursing pads as necessary to avoid soiling your clothing. Sterile dressings are not necessary.
9. Despite the greatest of care, any wound can become infected. If your breast becomes more swollen, red, starts to drain profusely, or becomes increasingly more painful, contact our office.
10. It is not uncommon to develop fluid accumulation in the back as well as the reconstructed breast after drains are removed. Do not be alarmed. Usually the body will absorb the fluid as the healing process continues. If the accumulation of fluid becomes uncomfortable it may be drained without discomfort in the office.
11. Do not wear a bra following your surgery. Camisoles or stretchy undershirts can be worn. Regular bras can be worn after three weeks if the breast flap is well healed.
12. Return to work will be discussed with you at your follow-up visits.

#### **THINGS TO REPORT TO OUR OFFICE**

1. Severe pain unrelieved by medication.
2. Temperature of 101 degrees or more.
3. More swelling and/or pain on one side than the other.
4. Nausea or vomiting.
5. Increased redness of chest skin.

Should any of these conditions exist, or should you have concerns about your surgery, you can reach the office at 717-728-1700 or Dr. Stratis on his cell number 717-574-2116.