**ABDOMINOPLASTY INSTRUCTIONS**

**PREPARING FOR SURGERY**

* Avoid NSAIDs (aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen) for 2 weeks prior to surgery. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) is OK for aches and pains.
* Stop taking herbal medications (fish oil, garlic, ginkgo, glucosamine, etc.) and multivitamins 2 weeks prior to surgery as these may also thin your blood.
* Refrain from ALL nicotine/tobacco use including nicotine replacement therapy AND secondhand smoke at least 1 month before and after surgery. Nicotine and tobacco can significantly delay healing, prevent fat transfers from being successful, and result in possible scarring. We do require a 2-week pre-op nicotine test to be completed in our office to clear you for surgery. If post op complications arise within the first month of surgery, we will also do a nicotine test to verify there has not been nicotine in your system prior to any further revision procedures.
* Refrain from ALL recreational drug use and any THC usage in any form at least 2 weeks prior to surgery and 2 weeks after surgery. Drug use can cause an increased heart rate and pulmonary complications, which can also lead to bleeding in the early post operative period.
* You must schedule a pre-op physical with your primary physician 3-4 weeks before surgery.
* Two weeks prior to surgery, you will have a pre-operative appointment in our office. During this appointment, we will review your medical history, discuss your prescriptions, and answer any questions you may have about the procedure. It is important that you have completed the physical with your primary care provider prior to this appointment with our team.
* Plan to take AT LEAST 1, if not 2 weeks off to rest and recover. After that, some patients report some discomfort in the weeks that follow, but it slowly improves.
* Arrange to have someone 19 or older to drive you to/from surgery and stay with you for at least 24 hours after the procedure. NO Uber/ride share services allowed.
* Your body needs enough protein for your surgical wounds to heal. It’s important to increase your protein intake daily 2 weeks prior to surgery and during your healing process.
* Starting 3 days prior to surgery, bathe with CHG soap daily (see CHG instruction sheet given at your pre-op appointment). Do. not shave the hair in any area near the surgical site(s).
* Start shopping for items on the list below 2-3 weeks prior to surgery and have clean wash cloths, towels, sheets, and clothes to wear after bathing 3 days prior to surgery.
* If you’re on any GLP-1 receptor agonist (Semaglutide, Ozempic, etc.), weight loss injections or tablets, refrain from injecting or taking those 3-4 weeks prior to surgery, or as otherwise directed by your surgeon.
* No estrogen medications one month before and after surgery. This includes contraceptives, pellets, patches etc.
* All body piercings/metal jewelry MUST be removed prior to the day of surgery. Failure to do so will result in an additional fee collected the day of surgery

**SHOPPING LIST**

1. Tylenol or Acetaminophen
2. Advil or Ibuprofen
3. Mirlax or other stool softeners
4. Bendaryl
5. Loose fitting pajamas/clothes that button in the front
6. Gauze or clean towels
7. Shower chair or stool to sit on while bathing
8. A walker (if needed)

**POST-OPERATIVE CARE**

* **Positioning restrictions** - You need to remain flexed at the hips/waist (hunched over) for the first several days after surgery. You may not sleep flat on your back or on your stomach during that time also. It may be easier for you to sleep in a recliner, otherwise ensure that you sleep on your back with your knees and back propped up on several pillows or wedges to maintain flexion at your hips/waist to take tension off of your incision. Over the course of the first week, it will become easier to stand up straight, you should make small amounts of progress every day. After one week, you should be able to stand straight and sleep flat on your back. Maintaining a flexed position during this first week can cause back discomfort and taking the muscle relaxants will help with this.
* **Walking**- Avoid sitting for more than 2 hours at a time. Light walking is recommended immediately after surgery and will help you heal faster to walk daily with a relaxed pace. No strenuous exercise/activity that increases your heart rate over 100 beats per minute until approved by your doctor.
* **Diet** – Please resume your normal diet at home with an increase in protein. Protein will help your wounds to heal. We suggest adding protein shakes for supplementation. Try to avoid foods and meals high in sodium. Sodium will increase swelling.
* **Abdominal Binder**- Wear your abdominal binder (and foam underneath it if applied at the time of surgery) at all times for the first two days after surgery. After two days you may remove it to shower, but you must reapply it after. Place gauze pads or a clean folded towel over the incision (under the abdominal binder), as needed for drainage or irritation. You must wear your binder at night while sleeping and at all times until cleared by your surgeon.
* **Drains**- Please refer to your take home drain care teaching and recording sheet (given with your pre-op paperwork). Strip tubing, empty bulb and record outputs as directed. Bring the record of output to all follow-up appointments. Drains are typically removed once the output from two consecutive days is less than 20 mL on both days. If your drains are not putting out more than 20 mL for two consecutive days, please notify your provider to see if you can get them removed prior to your next clinic visit.
* **Daily Showers**- Start daily showers 48 hours after surgery. Do not take a bath, sit in a spa or hot tub, or swim until your doctor tells you it is okay. When you shower, do not let water hit the incision line or directly on the wound, as that may be painful. It is ok to let water run gently over the incision or over the wound. Gently clean the area with soapy water but DO NOT rub the wound. After showering, pat the incision or wound area dry with a clean towel or gauze. Do not rub the skin around your incisions. When you shower, make sure the drains do NOT hang down and pull on the drain insertion area or the stitch holding the drain in the skin. Thread a shoelace through the plastic loop on the drain. Tie the shoelace ends together. Place the loop around your neck so drains are supported by the "shoelace string necklace."
* **Dressing & Wound Care**- Do NOT remove your dressings/steri-strips over your incisions unless specifically told to do so. They will be removed during your follow-up appointment if/when needed. If the dressing leaks, has odor, or needs attention, call the clinic.

It is normal to experience some drainage from your incision the first week after surgery. You may change your gauze dressings starting 48 hours after surgery, at which point you may change the gauze as needed for drainage. Please keep some gauze on your incisions to collect any drainage that may otherwise stain your clothes until you are seen in the clinic. If you notice any breakdown of your wounds, drainage that persists past 7 days, pus draining from your wounds, or redness around the incision, please contact your provider for further instructions.

* **Constipation**- Constipation can be a problem because of taking narcotic (opioid) pain medicine and not moving around very much. You may keep from getting constipated by eating fresh fruit, lean protein, and vegetables, and drinking plenty of fluids. Avoid fried and greasy foods. We recommend over-the-counter stool softeners for the first week or two to keep from getting constipated. Please take the stool softeners as directed to prevent any issues related to constipation. If you have not had a bowel movement within 48 hours after surgery, please notify your provider.
* **Alcohol & Pain Medicine**- Do not drink alcohol and take pain medicine. Do not drive within 24 hours of taking narcotic (opioid) pain medicine.
* **Lymphatic Massage-** You may participate in lymphatic massage as soon as you are comfortable doing so after your surgery. Lymphatic massage is often done after body contouring procedures to reduce swelling and improve comfort and contour. Please ask your provider if you have specific questions about this.
* **Lifting**- Do not lift anything weighing over three pounds for one week, then do not lift anything more than ten pounds for an additional three weeks.
* **Do NOT use Heat/Ice Packs**- The skin around your incisions may be numb or have decreased sensation after surgery for a while. This can predispose you to cold or heat related injuries if you place packs on those areas. For that reason, please do not apply any ice or heat packs directly over your wounds.
* **Flying/Travel** – No significant travel or trips until at least 1 month after surgery and short flights until at least post operative day 10, unless indicated otherwise by your surgeon. Address all travel plans with the surgeon prior to scheduling surgery.
* **Swimming/Water Submerging** - No swimming or being fully submerged in water until cleared by your surgeon, but typically cleared for this at about the 1-month post op.
* **Workouts/Exercise** - See restrictions above and no strenuous exercise/activity that increases your heart rate over 100 beats per minute until approved by your doctor.

**RECOVERY PEARLS**

* Use pajamas that button the front and wear loose shirts, as they are easier to put on after surgery.
* Avoid coughing. Coughing may exacerbate any pain you are having. Use couch drops or other over-the-counter medications as needed to help reduce any coughing after surgery.

**QUESTIONS?**

* During normal business hours, please call 402-739-8144 and follow the prompts to speak with our clinical team. To ensure a timely response, please call our office with medical questions. Please DO NOT email or text post operative questions.
* If you have a concern after hours, you can follow the prompts to speak with our on-call service. Please note, our on-call service is unable to answer detailed questions about your care. Please contact our office during normal business hours to speak to one of our plastic surgery team members. If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, please go to the nearest emergency department or contact 911.