Panniculectomy – Pre- and Post-Operative Instructions

#### **Please Read First**

The information on this page provides a condensed overview of key preparation and recovery guidelines for Panniculectomy surgery. For complete instructions—including specific timelines, medication details, and aftercare protocols—please download the full Pre-Operative and Post-Operative instruction documents below. These serve as your primary reference for a safe and successful recovery.

### **What to Expect**

A panniculectomy removes excess skin and fat from the lower abdomen, often following significant weight loss. The procedure is typically performed under general anesthesia and may involve drains and compression garments during recovery. Most patients will walk slightly hunched over initially and gradually return to normal posture.

## **Key Pre-Operative Guidelines (Summary)**

* **Fasting:** No food or drink (including water, mints, or gum) for 8 hours prior to surgery.
* **Transportation:** A responsible adult must drive you home and remain with you overnight. Rideshare services are not permitted.
* **Medications:** Discontinue aspirin, NSAIDs, and blood-thinning supplements as directed (typically 2–3 weeks prior).
* **Lifestyle Adjustments:** Cease smoking and limit alcohol intake in the weeks leading up to surgery. These steps reduce complications and support healing.
* **Day of Surgery:** Shower the night before or morning of surgery. Do not apply lotions, deodorant, or makeup. Wear loose, front-opening clothing.

## Key Post-Operative Guidelines (Summary)

**Medications:**

* Use Tylenol for pain as needed. Avoid NSAIDs.
* Take narcotic pain medication and anti-nausea medication (Zofran) as prescribed.
* Complete your full course of antibiotics.
* Use stool softeners or laxatives to prevent constipation.

**Hydration & Nutrition:**

* Drink 8–10 glasses of water daily.
* Limit caffeine and avoid alcohol.
* Eat small, light meals if your appetite is low.

**Mobility & Positioning:**

* When getting out of bed, roll to your side and push up with your arm to avoid abdominal strain.
* Sleep with your knees slightly bent and head elevated to reduce tension on your incision.
* Change positions every 2 hours to reduce clot risk.
* You may need to walk slightly hunched for 1–3 weeks.
* Avoid lifting over 5 lbs for 4–6 weeks.

**Exercise:**

* Avoid all strenuous exercise and abdominal strain for 6–8 weeks.
* Resume light activity only when cleared by your surgeon.

**Showering & Bathing:**

* You may shower 24 hours after surgery, avoiding direct contact with incisions.
* Do not soak in baths, hot tubs, or pools until your surgeon confirms it is safe.

**Sun Protection:**

* Keep your incision covered and protected from the sun for at least 12 months. Use sunscreen when needed.

### **Recovery Expectations**

**Common Recovery Symptoms:**

* Pain and soreness are expected, especially in the lower abdomen.
* Bruising and swelling can persist for 6–8 weeks.
* Fatigue may last several weeks.
* Walking posture will gradually normalize over 2–3 weeks.

**Healing Milestones:**

* **1–2 Weeks:** Initial healing and possible drain removal.
* **6–8 Weeks:** Swelling begins to subside; light activity can resume.
* **3–6 Months:** Full recovery and scar softening continue.

### **Follow-Up and Support**

**Urgent Concerns:** Contact our office if you experience significant redness, warmth, drainage, fever over 101°F, or persistent pain unrelieved by medication.

**Emergency Situations:** For difficulty breathing or chest pain, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

**Ongoing Communication:**

* + For non-urgent questions, please email clinicalrn@drshimching.com.
	+ For urgent matters, contact the office directly from 9am – 5pm at (808) 585-8855.
	+ For urgent matters that occur after hours, please use the physician exchange at (808) 524-2575.

**Appointments:** Follow-up visits are essential to ensure proper healing and address any concerns. Attend all scheduled appointments unless advised otherwise.

### **Download Complete Instructions**

For full details on recovery, medication, drain care, and activity timelines, download the detailed guide here:

**[Download Panniculectomy Pre & Post-Operative Instructions (PDF)]**