

Abdominoplasty

Pre & Post Operative Instructions

Preparing for a General Anesthesia Procedure

General Anesthesia: This type of anesthesia renders you completely unconscious during the procedure, ensuring you feel no pain and have no memory of the surgery. It is typically used for more extensive operations and requires careful monitoring by an anesthesiologist.

- **Instructions:** Nothing to eat or drink 8 hours before surgery. This includes water, mints, candy, or gum.
- **Post-Surgery Transportation:** It is mandatory to arrange for a ride home from surgery with a family member or friend. Patients may not use taxis or Ubers.
 - **Why?:** After surgery, especially with general anesthesia, it's important for your safety to have someone responsible to take you home and provide care for at least 1-2 days. This ensures that you have the necessary support during the initial critical recovery period. If you do not arrange for transportation and care for at least 1-2 days, then your surgery may be canceled, at your expense.

Shopping List

- Tylenol (Acetaminophen):** If your pain is manageable, Tylenol is a suitable alternative to narcotic pain medications. Please avoid NSAIDs such as Ibuprofen and Naproxen until the second week post-surgery.
- No-Slip Socks:** These are recommended to help prevent accidental falls and ensure safe mobility within your home.

Pre-Operative Instructions

Medication Management Before Surgery: Guidelines for Minimizing Bleeding Risks

These are general recommendations. For more information please refer to the email: Preoperative Instructions for Your Upcoming Surgery &/or contact our office for a safe plan tailored to your health needs and surgical procedure

- **Aspirin and NSAIDs:** Please discontinue use at least 3 weeks before your surgery, unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.
- **Anticoagulants (Warfarin, Heparin, Direct Oral Anticoagulants):** The discontinuation schedule varies. Please consult your surgeon at least 3 weeks before surgery to discuss a tailored plan, which may include temporary adjustments to your regimen or bridging therapy.
- **Herbal Supplements and Vitamins:** Discontinue any herbal supplements and vitamins that can increase bleeding risk, such as vitamin E, fish oil, ginkgo biloba, and garlic, at least 2 weeks prior to surgery.
- **ADD / ADHD medications** are to be avoided the day before surgery.
- **Contrave (Naltrexone-containing meds):** Patient must consult with the prescribing physician about when & how to stop this medication prior to surgery.
- **Weight Loss Meds (Ozempic, Wegovy, Semaglutide, ect.), & Biotin.:** are to be stopped 2 weeks prior to surgery.
- **Illicit Drug Use:** Please be honest about any illicit drug use during the preoperative assessment. Your safety is our priority and accurate medical information is crucial for planning a safe and effective surgical procedure.
 - Illicit drug use can have significant interactions with anesthesia and other medications administered during surgery, potentially leading to complications.
 - **Examples of the most important substances to mention include:**
 - Cocaine & Meth.

Consultation Is Key: If you are taking any of the above medications or supplements for chronic conditions, do not stop them without first consulting with the physician who prescribed them and your surgeon.

Together, you will develop a safe plan tailored to your health needs and surgical procedure.

4 Weeks Before Surgery

- **Reducing/Stopping Nicotine:** We strongly recommend reducing or ideally stopping nicotine (including cigarettes, oral tobacco, e-cigarettes with nicotine, patches, lozenges, and/or gums) for 4 weeks before and after your surgery.
 - **Why?:** Nicotine can significantly hinder your healing process and increase the risk of complications. Nicotine constricts blood vessels, which can impair blood flow to the surgical area, affecting healing and recovery. Any reduction in nicotine exposure is beneficial and contributes positively to your surgical outcome.

2 Weeks Before Surgery

- **Alcohol Consumption:** We encourage patients to reduce or stop alcohol consumption for at least 2 weeks before and after surgery.
 - **Why?:** Alcohol can increase the risk of bruising, swelling, and can prolong the healing process. Reducing alcohol intake, even if complete cessation is challenging, but can significantly improve your recovery experience.

The Day of Surgery: Your Preparation Guide

On the day of your surgery at Asia Pacific Surgery, we prioritize your comfort, safety, and the success of your procedure. To help everything go smoothly, please follow these guidelines carefully:

- **Shower or Bath:** On the day of surgery, please take a shower or bath using soap (either antimicrobial or non-antimicrobial).
 - **Avoid Applying Products:** Do not apply any lotions, perfumes, or other products to your skin after bathing.
- **Medications:**
 - **Blood Pressure Medications:**
 - Take your blood pressure medication as usual, including the day of surgery. On the day of surgery, take it with only a small sip of water.
 - **Diabetes Medications:**
 - DO NOT take any oral and/or injectable diabetic meds the night before or the morning of surgery.
 - Only take medications approved or prescribed by your surgeon with a small sip of water.

- **Fasting:** Adhere to the fasting instructions provided by your surgical team. This means no eating or drinking, including water, for 8 hours before your surgery. Check your paperwork or email our office for further guidance, if needed. This information will be on the 1st page of this document.
- **Shaving:** If shaving is necessary in the area to be operated on, please do so 3 days prior to your surgery date. Shaving closer to your surgery date, including the day before or the day of, is not advised as it can increase the risk of surgical site infections.
- **Jewelry and Valuables:** Remove all jewelry and refrain from bringing valuables to the clinic, including piercings from the neck up. We cannot take responsibility for lost items.
- **Makeup and Skincare Products:** DO NOT wear any makeup or apply skincare products on the day of your surgery.
- **Menstruation and Surgery**
 - If you are on your menstrual period on the day of surgery, you may wear a sanitary pad or disposable underwear.
 - For safety reasons, internal menstrual products (such as tampons or menstrual cups) are not used.
 - After surgery, if you need menstrual supplies before leaving the facility, pads can be provided upon request. Application of any menstrual product is performed by the patient.
- **Clothing:** Opt for loose, comfortable clothing. A button-up or zip-front top is ideal for after the surgery.
- **Communicating Questions or Concerns:** If you have any last-minute questions or concerns, please get in touch with us immediately. See the last page of this document for contact information.

Our team is committed to making sure you feel fully prepared and confident in the care you'll receive.

Post-Operative Instructions

Medications

1. Tylenol (Acetaminophen):
 - Pain Relief: Tylenol is safe to take for managing pain. Please avoid NSAIDs such as Ibuprofen and Aleve, as they can increase the risk of bleeding.
2. Narcotic Pain Medication:
 - Prescription Medication: If you received a prescription for narcotic pain relievers, take them as directed for pain management. Be aware that these medications can cause constipation.
 - Preventing Constipation: You will be prescribed a laxative and a stool softener to prevent constipation. It's important to start taking these with your first dose of narcotic pain medication. Additionally, increasing dietary fiber, fluid intake, and physical activity can help manage constipation.
3. Zofran (Ondansetron):
 - Nausea Prevention: Zofran is prescribed to help prevent nausea and vomiting, which can be common after surgery. Take this medication as directed, particularly before meals or as soon as you feel nauseated.
4. Antibiotics:
 - Infection Prevention: If you've been prescribed antibiotics, it's crucial to complete the full course as directed, even if you start feeling better. This helps prevent infection and ensures the effectiveness of the treatment.
5. Sinnech (Arnica Montana):
 - Reducing Swelling and Bruising: Sinnech is a homeopathic Arnica montana regimen that you'll take to help reduce swelling and bruising. This can potentially speed up your recovery process. Please follow the specific dosage instructions provided.

Nutrition

- Hydration: Stay hydrated with plenty of water. A general guideline is to aim for at least 8-10 glasses of water per day (about 2 to 2.5 liters). Limit or avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Meal Approach: If you have a reduced appetite, eat small, frequent meals.

Activity

- **Walking After Surgery**
 - It is normal to feel tightness in your abdomen after surgery. During the first 5–7 days, you may find it more comfortable to walk with a slight bend at the waist. This hunched posture helps reduce tension on your incision and promotes safe healing.
 - As your body heals and you feel more comfortable, gradually return to a fully upright posture. This usually happens within the first 1–2 weeks.
 - Begin walking short distances around your home (or hotel room if traveling) on the day of surgery or as soon as you're able, with assistance as needed.
 - This includes walking within the room, to the bathroom, and around the space—not walking outside or climbing stairs in the immediate post-op period.
 - Walk every 1–2 hours while awake to help prevent blood clots (DVT), improve circulation, and reduce swelling.
 - Do not stay in bed for extended periods — light movement is essential for recovery.
 - Always follow your surgeon's specific recommendations and contact the office if you experience increased pain, shortness of breath, or difficulty walking.

- **Resting Position:** To support your recovery after abdominoplasty, it's important to rest in a position that reduces strain on your abdomen. Lying on your back with your upper body slightly elevated and your knees gently bent (you can use pillows under your knees) helps relieve tension on the incision site and promotes healing.
- **Travel:** If you have any upcoming travel plans or specific concerns, please discuss them with your surgeon during your follow-up appointments to ensure they align with your recovery process.
- **Return to work:** Most patients require approximately 5-7 days off work depending on their job responsibilities. Returning to work with a light schedule initially or even part-time can be beneficial as well.
- **Abdominal Strength & Support:** After the initial healing phase, some patients notice temporary changes in core strength following abdominoplasty. Once cleared by your surgeon, guided core strengthening with a qualified professional may be helpful as part of your overall recovery.
- **Sexual Intercourse:** Sex can be resumed when you feel ready, with no restrictions.

How to Care for Your Incisions

- **Stitches:** All stitches are absorbable and do not require removal.
- **Belly button:** Your new belly button will be covered with a dressing. Remove the dressing before getting into the shower. Gently clean the area with a Q-tip moistened in lukewarm water with a mild, fragrance-free soap, then rinse with plain water. Pat dry and apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment as directed.

Negative Pressure (NP) Seal Instructions (If Used)

Some patients may have an NP (Negative Pressure) Seal placed over their incision after surgery. This dressing looks similar to a bandage and helps protect the incision and support healing.

General Care Instructions

- Keep the NP Seal in place unless instructed otherwise by your surgeon.
- Do not remove, adjust, or tamper with the dressing.
- The NP Seal can get wet in the shower, but avoid direct water spray on the area.
- Other dressings, such as paper tape around the area, may be removed as instructed.

What Is Normal

The following can occur and do not usually require an urgent call:

- Mild fluid or moisture under the dressing
- Partial lifting of the edges
- A feeling that the seal is less tight over time

These issues can often be addressed at your next follow-up appointment.

When to Contact the Office (during business hours)

Please contact our office during regular business hours if you notice:

- The dressing becomes fully saturated
- The seal no longer appears intact
- You are unsure whether the dressing is functioning properly

Bathing & Swimming

- Showering. You may shower with regular soap and water the day following surgery.
- Hot Tubs/Baths/Swimming Pools. No tub baths or Jacuzzi until your incisions have healed, and approved by your surgeon, which is usually around 2 weeks. It is best to wait one month for hot tubs as they tend to have more bacteria than regular chlorinated swimming pools.

How To Care for Your Drains

- Drains are often utilized post-abdominoplasty to prevent fluid accumulation at the surgical site and promote healing. If you have a drain(s), please refer to the handout: [Jackson-Pratt \(JP\) Drain Home Care Instructions](#).

What to Expect

- Compression Garment: Expect to wear a compression garment for 4-6 weeks after your abdominoplasty. The garment should fit snugly but not so tight that it causes discomfort, difficulty breathing, or skin irritation such as wounds or blisters. Wear your garment at all times, except when showering or washing it. This will help reduce swelling, support your abdominal muscles, and improve body contouring. It is helpful to have two garments, so you can wear one while washing the other. If your compression garment feels too tight or causes discomfort, adjust it or contact your surgeon for guidance.
- Drainage: Drainage can occur from the incision sites for the first 24-72 hours. The drainage will be blood tinged (pink / light-red). You may use gauze or a light pad to reinforce post-op dressings if this occurs.
- Bruising: You can expect to have some bruises. The bruising can be wide-spread, depending on the extent of liposuction performed. Most bruises will heal after about 2-3 weeks. The bruises will go from a purplish color to a yellow/green shade as it resolves.
- Swelling is common after abdominoplasty and may last for weeks or months. Swelling can improve with rest and the consistent use of compression garments. Physical activity may temporarily worsen swelling but is encouraged for overall recovery.
- Itching: Itching at the incision sites is normal for a few days. You may take Benadryl to help with this.

- **Sensory Changes in Skin:** You may notice numbness or a tingling sensation around your incision sites and throughout the liposuction areas. This is normal. You can expect a return of normal sensation after a few months.
- **Scars:** Scars may take up to a year to fully heal. Avoid direct sun exposure on scars, as this can cause darkening.
- **Tightness:** You may not be able to stand up straight for the first week. This is normal. By the second week you will gradually notice that you are able to stand more upright.

Emotional Recovery

It's normal to experience a range of emotions after surgery, especially when the appearance of your body changes. Some patients feel relief, while others may go through moments of doubt or grief. Please know that these feelings are valid and part of the healing process. You're not alone, and support is available if you need it.

Signs of Infection or Complications

It's important to monitor your recovery and be aware of any signs that may indicate an infection or complication. Contact your surgeon immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Increased redness, warmth, or swelling around the incision site
- Pus-like or foul-smelling drainage from the wound
- Fever over 101°F (38.3°C)
- Severe pain that is not relieved by prescribed medication
- Excessive bleeding or new bruising
- Persistent chills or feeling unwell

Prompt communication with your healthcare team ensures the best possible recovery. Do not hesitate to reach out if you have concerns.

Follow-up Care

- **Prioritizing Appointments:** Attending follow-up appointments is crucial for monitoring your recovery & ensuring the effectiveness of your treatment.

Patient Communication Guide: Who to Contact Post-Operation

Type of Concern	Contact Information	Instructions/Examples
Non-Urgent Questions or Concerns for Dr. Ching or Dr. Long	Email: clinicalrn@drshimching.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General recovery questions • Appointment inquiries • Prescription refills
Urgent Questions or Concerns	Office Phone: (808) 585-8855 <u>After 5pm or on weekends:</u> Dr. Ching & Dr. Long @ Physician's Exchange (808) 524-2575	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swelling, bruising, or redness • Severe pain • High fever • Unusual discharge or odor • Uncontrolled bleeding
Medical Emergencies	Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty breathing • Chest pain • Severe calf pain • Signs of heart attack or pulmonary embolism

Our Commitment to You:

We are here to support you throughout your recovery journey. Your safety is our priority, and we encourage open communication. By guiding you on the most appropriate communication channels for your concerns, we aim to provide efficient and effective care, ensuring you feel fully supported & cared for.