

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER 1ST STAGE BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

- Do not take a shower until the drains have been removed or the Dr. advises otherwise.
- Please call the office (804) 320-8545 each morning at 9am to report 24-hour drainage output. Drain will be removed when output is less than 20-25 cc's for 2 days in a row.
- You may drive when you are no longer taking pain medication and feel comfortable enough to do so.
- Do not do any strenuous arm exercises until about 2 weeks after surgery. However, within a few days of surgery, you must gently begin doing your range of motion exercises. Follow the Reach-to-Recovery exercises until you have a reliable, good range of motion. I also have instructions for range of motion on the website (snow angels). Let me know if your arm movement is still limited at 3 weeks.
- Please call me at the office **immediately** if your breast reconstruction skin starts to turn red, warm, tender, or otherwise show signs of infection. If an infection is not treated immediately, you can lose your implant. I don't mind if you call in the evening or on weekends for this. **It is that important.**
- Please do not take your medications on an empty stomach. In addition, be aware that most narcotic pain medications can cause constipation or nausea. The use of over-the-counter laxatives is recommended post-op while taking prescriptive pain medicines.
- Please avoid ASPIRIN, IBUPROFEN, or any of the medications listed on your pre-op sheet for 2 weeks after your surgery as this will increase your risk of bruising and poor healing.
- The best way for you to heal faster and feel better sooner is to walk every day as soon as you are able. You can rest afterwards, but walking will keep you from losing muscle mass, prevent clots in your legs and bring your energy level back sooner. I will restrict you from aerobic exercise, but walking is advised. You can do lower body exercises after 2 weeks, but no aerobic exercise for at least 3 weeks to a month.
- **If you have Steri-strips, please leave these on until they are dangling by a thread. Please do not apply any cream or lotions on the incisions until cleared by the doctor. Please buy Silicone Scar Tape from Amazon.com to replace Steri-strips when they fall off.**
- Please do not use a heating pad or ice packs to the surgical areas.
- If you have a drain in, you should be on antibiotics. If you run out of antibiotics and your drain is still in, please call the office for a refill. Please stop taking your antibiotics once your drain(s) have been removed.
- You may find when you get home that you will have gained weight after surgery. This is simply from IV fluids and resolves in about 2 weeks.

- **Smokers heal poorly in terms of infection and wound breakdown, and you are advised not to smoke, vape, or use nicotine replacements for 6 weeks prior to and after your surgery. Nicotine screening may be necessary the day of surgery. IF THE TEST IS POSITIVE, YOUR SURGERY WILL BE CANCELED.**
- After a mastectomy, your skin will have diminished sensation and will be more susceptible to burns. This can be from a heating pad or even sun exposure. This is more so in radiated skin and pre-pectoral reconstruction. Please make sure your bathing suit has ultraviolet ray protection. DO NOT USE A HEATING PAD.
- If you are having a “delay” procedure to increase blood flow to your nipples, then either I or your cancer surgeon MUST see you the day following your procedure. If this is not possible, I ask that you send pictures to my email the following day.
- Both Covid and the Covid vaccine have an unusual complication: sudden onset of breast encapsulation. Please take Advil or Motrin, or any other anti-inflammatories, and Singulair for three days before the vaccine and for a week after Covid or the Covid vaccine.
- **WE REQUEST THAT YOU PICK UP YOUR MEDICATIONS IN ADVANCE OF YOUR SURGERY DATE; ADDITIONALLY, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU REVIEW THE MEDICATIONS AND DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS WITH YOUR CAREGIVER.**
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PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL DR BLANCHET IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS. IF YOUR CONCERN IS URGENT, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE (804) 320-8545. **IN A TRUE EMERGENCY, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.**

PATIENT’S SIGNATURE

DATE

CAREGIVER’S SIGNATURE

DATE