

Abdominoplasty and/or Liposuction Post-Surgery Instructions

Thank you for choosing Dr. Papanicolaou to perform your surgery. Please feel free to call us at any time or refer to resources on our website if instructions are not clear or issues are not addressed by this instruction sheet.

Once your surgery is completed, you must follow all the instructions given to you in order to heal properly and have a good outcome. The following instructions are your obligation.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- Tightness and stiffness in abdomen
- Bruising, swelling and redness in abdomen
- Tingling, burning or intermittent shooting pain in the abdominal region
- Skin firmness, hypersensitivity or lack of sensitivity in abdomen
- Shiny skin and/or itchy feeling in abdominal area
- Anesthetics and other medications will be in your body for 24 hours, so you may feel sleepy. Patient should not drive a car, operate machinery, or power tools.
- Certain anesthetics and pain medications may produce nausea and vomiting in certain individuals. If nausea becomes a problem at home call our office.
- If you experience discomfort in the arm used to give medication, apply moist warm compress to the area, 20 minutes on 20 minutes off for 1 hour, repeat as needed. Call our office if you experience pain, redness or swelling of the arm.

These are all normal experiences as the skin, tissues and sensory nerves heal. These symptoms will gradually resolve over time. Pain medication and muscle relaxants will help you cope with any discomfort. If you have drains you may experience additional localized discomfort. Swelling can cause the skin in treated areas to appear shiny. As the healing process advances, you may also find a mild to severe itchy feeling. An antihistamine like Benadryl can help alleviate severe, constant itchiness.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR: Call the office immediately if you experience any of the following...

- A high fever, (over 101) severe nausea and vomiting, continued dizziness or incoherent behavior, such as hallucinations.
- Any pain that cannot be controlled by your pain medication.
- Bright red skin that is hot to the touch.
- Excessive bleeding or fluid seeping through the incisions or persistent bright red blood in drains especially the day after surgery.
- A severely misshapen region anywhere on your abdomen or bruising that is localized to one specific point of the abdomen.
- Shortness of breath and/or difficulty breathing.

WHAT TO DO:

- **Rest, but not bed rest:** While rest is important in the early stages of healing, equally important is that you are ambulatory, meaning that you are walking under your own strength. Spend 10 minutes every 2 hours engaged in light walking indoors as you recover.
- When resting make sure you are reclined with your head and chest slightly elevated above your lower body.

- **Good Nutrition:** Fluids are critical following surgery. Stick to non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free, and green tea-free beverages including fruit juices and water, milk, and yogurt drinks. You must consume at least 8 ounces of fluid every 2 hours. Stick with soft, bland, nutritious food for the first 24 hours.
- **Take all medication exactly as prescribed:** Oral pain medications and antibiotics.
- **Change your incision dressings:** Your incisions will seep fluid and some blood for a short time after surgery. Keep dressings clean and dry. A cotton swab with peroxide is appropriate for cleaning incisions. Do not remove any steri-strips over your stitches. If you have a drain placed in your incisions, carefully follow the instructions for drain care and record drained fluid on the drain care log.
- **Wear your compression garment around the clock but not tight.** Only remove garment to cleanse your incision or to empty and drains.
- **Relax.** Do not engage in any stressful activities. Do not lift, push or pull anything. Take care of no one and let others tend to you.

Your body will change with age. The appearance of your abdomen will change too. Although the outcomes of a tummy tuck are generally permanent, any significant weight gain or loss, pregnancy as well as the normal influences of aging can cause changes to your appearance. You may wish to undergo revision surgery at a later date to help maintain your appearance throughout life.