

INFORMATION ABOUT COMPRESSIVE GARNMENTS AFTER PLASTIC SURGERY

After undergoing a plastic surgery procedure, it is important to diligently follow all postoperative instructions. One of the most critical aspects of those postoperative guidelines is wearing the proper compression garments.

Following your surgeon's instructions regarding your compression garments can help ensure a smooth recovery and promote your final results.

- **What is a compression garment?**

Compression garments are medical-grade articles of clothing made with high-quality, durable, breathable materials like nylon and elastic designed for patients to wear postop. They are used as part of the plastic surgery recovery process for a variety of body procedures, from breast augmentations to tummy tucks, to provide added comfort while facilitating the healing process.

There are compression garments for nearly every part of the body and every type of procedure, not to mention various sizes, styles and types.

For example, after a breast procedure, you may be advised to wear a surgical compression bra. A surgical compression bra is similar to a high-impact sports bra, minus any underwire. Following a procedure such as neck liposuction, you may be fitted for a compression garment that wraps around the head and underneath the chin.

Some compression garments are also designed to fit around the lower body, complete with openings that allow you to use the bathroom without removing the garment.

- **Five benefits of compression after plastic surgery.**

After your procedure, you will be placed in a compressive garment provided by Dr Szpalski. This garment should be worn at all times for the designated duration of time and should only be removed to bathe or shower.

After your initial follow-up appointment, we will advise you as to when you can begin removing the compression garment and for how long. Be sure not to rush through this process, though, as properly wearing your compression garment after plastic surgery offers several significant benefits.

- Reduces swelling

A compression garment can help to minimize post-operative swelling and related discomfort. Maintaining constant pressure on the surgical site will prevent excess build-up of subcutaneous fluid – or swelling – and encourage your body to re-absorb the fluid that accumulates.

The more you reduce swelling, the faster your body can heal. The faster your body heals, the sooner you will see your intended results.

If the garment becomes too loose after the swelling goes down, talk to your plastic surgeon to be fitted for a smaller size.

- Decreases bruising

Disruption of the blood vessels is a normal side effect of any surgical procedure. When blood vessels rupture, blood leaks into the surrounding tissue. This can result in bruising around the surgical site.

Compression garments, however, can help prevent blood cells from moving toward the skin's surface, minimizing the appearance of bruising after surgery.

- Minimizes visible scarring

Dr Szpalski will aim to perform your procedure in a way that results in the least amount of scarring possible, often by strategically placing incisions in areas that are not very visible. That said, you may still experience scarring, the extent of which can vary depending on factors such as your genetics and the surgical technique used.

Along with a detailed scar treatment protocol, the pressure applied by a compression garment will help to soften and flatten the area, gradually reducing the appearance of scars.

- Improves comfort

Because compression garments are generally made with elastic and nylon, it can stretch to support your tissue, making the healing and recovery process more comfortable while also protecting the surgical site.

Your compression garment should fit snugly enough to perform its function but should not be so tight that it is uncomfortable or restricts breathing. If your custom-fit compression garment is causing pain or discomfort, talk to Dr Szpalski.

- Reduces the risk of infection

Rest is a critical component of the postsurgical recovery process, as it allows your body to heal properly. However, limited mobility after surgery may result in poor circulation, leading to the development of blood clots.

A compression garment helps to promote circulation and rapid wound healing, which reduces the risk of blood clots and infection. Note, however, that your compression garment must always be clean to prevent infection at the surgical site.

- How long should I wear my compression garment?

Your compression garment should be worn day and night (with the exception of showering or bathing) for anywhere between one to three weeks. The exact timeframe will vary depending on your body, the procedure you had and any additional factors determined by Dr Szpalski. After approval from your surgeon, you can expect to wear the garment at night for several weeks.

Because it is important to keep your garment clean to prevent infection, it is fine to periodically remove your garment for cleaning. However, the goal should be to wear it as consistently as possible to promote the best possible results.