

## **DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS**

### ***Tummy Tuck (Abdominoplasty), Panniculectomy, Body lift***

#### **MEDICATIONS**

- You may resume taking your routine medications, unless your surgeon instructs you differently.
- Do not take any supplements, blood thinners or aspirin for 1 week after surgery unless instructed otherwise by your surgeon.
- You will get a prescription for narcotic pain relief medications. Please refer to the Pain Relief Medications after Procedures document for more information on optimal use of pain relief medications.
- You do NOT need antibiotics

#### **DIET**

- You should start resuming your normal diet gradually.
- Drink plenty of fluids or water (eight 8 ounce glasses a day)
- Do NOT drink alcohol for 2 days after surgery or while taking narcotics.

#### **ACTIVITY**

- **SHOWER:** You may shower the day after surgery **UNLESS YOU HAVE DRAINS. DO NOT SHOWER WITH DRAINS.** Do NOT take a tub bath, swim, or whirlpool for 3 weeks or if there are any openings in the incision. When taking a shower, remove the bra but leave the remaining dressings in place. Let the water run over them then gently dry your breasts with a towel. There may be some minor blood oozing from the incisions.
- If you have paper tape or Steri-Strips over the incisions, do NOT remove them. You may still shower with them and they will be removed in the office.
- If you have a PICO WOUND VAC on, it will stay on for exactly one week after the surgery. It will automatically stop working after 7 days. We will remove the dressing in the office and replace it with steristrips.
- You are encouraged to walk. While sitting, alternate flexing and pointing toes several times each hour to help with circulation.

- To maintain circulation and prevent blood clots in your legs, it is important to get out of your chair or bed every hour and walk around for at least 5 minutes. You do not need to do this during your normal sleeping hours.
- DRIVING: Do NOT drive while taking narcotic medications.
- Do NOT do any strenuous activity or exercise/ activities (running, weight lifting, aerobics, vacuuming) for 2-4 weeks. After you start exercising, go slowly over 1 to 2 weeks until you are comfortable with the exercises.
- Do NOT engage in any sexual activity for 2 weeks; resume when completely comfortable.
- Do NOT drive or handle heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medication or muscle relaxant medications.
- Do NOT cross your legs or sit for more than one (1) hour in the same position while awake.
- Do NOT travel in a cramped space (car or plane) for 10 days, if possible.

### **WHAT ELSE TO EXPECT**

- Some pain and discomfort for 1 to 2 weeks, although it should gradually get better from the first 2 to 3 days.
- You may notice a small amount of drainage from the incision sites on the first one 1 to 2 days. This is normal. You may cover with gauze and secure with paper tape.
- If there are any sutures, they will be removed 1 to 2 weeks after your surgery.
- Do not be overly concerned if you notice a decreased sensation in your surgical site.
- Surgical incisions are usually thin at first, become somewhat thick and red for up to 6 months, and then begin to fade. It usually takes at least 1 year to see improvement.

### **SCAR MANAGEMENT**

- Your scar will be covered by a dressing. Do not remove it before your next post operative appointment.

- Please refer to our Incision, Scar, and Wound Management Information document once the scars have healed.

### **ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Look at your incisions once a day to note any signs of infection:
- SIGNS of INFECTION include:
  - Incision area becoming red and warm to the touch.
  - Drainage leaking from incision site that is cloudy or pus-like. o Excessive swelling. Or more swelling on one side or the other.

### **WHEN TO CALL THE SURGEON OR OFFICE**

- Fever over 101 (38°C) for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Marked increase in redness, swelling, odor or pain around incision.
- Any excessive bleeding or drainage from your incisions.
- Pain is not relieved by prescription medication.
- Persistent problems with nausea or vomiting
- A small amount of red blood is not unusual but if you feel that the amount is excessive, please call the St Joseph University Medical Center and ask to speak to the plastic surgeon on call at +1 973 754 2000 or the office at 646-777-0170
- **CHEST PAIN or TROUBLE BREATHING: CALL 911 or go to an Emergency Room**

### **FOLLOW UP**

- Return next week for your follow up appointment with Dr Szpalski on\_\_\_\_\_. Please call the office at 646- 777-0170 to get a time.
- If there are any questions or concerns outside of regular business hours, please contact the Plastic Surgery Division at :+1 973 754 2000 and ask for the Plastic Surgeon On-Call. The plastic surgery resident will be able to help you and contact Dr Szpalski directly.