



DR JONATHAN
TOOGOOD

PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEON
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MASTECTOMY (RECONSTRUCTION)

PRE/POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- Prepare your skin for 3 weeks before surgery with Dermalac Lotion and Vitamin A, C & E Body Oil from Environ.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- You will need someone to drive you home after surgery and help you for 1 to 2 days.
- You will need plenty of rest.
- The combination of decreased activity and pain medication may promote constipation, so you may want to add more fruit and fibre to your diet. Be sure to increase your fluid intake. You may use Movicol to help keep your stool soft.
- Take pain medication as prescribed to prevent the pain from becoming severe.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Support garments should be worn 24/7 and only removed for short periods while taking a shower. You should wear the post-operative bra day and night for 6 weeks, and thereafter for 6 weeks during the day.
- Ice packs may be applied to the armpit – where lymph node dissection was done – to help ease discomfort and swelling.

ACTIVITIES

- Start walking as soon as possible. This helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until 2 weeks post-operatively.
- Limit use of arms for 4 weeks, i.e. no heavy lifting or raising arms above your head.
- Resume sexual activity as comfort permits, usually 2 to 3 weeks post-operatively.
- Avoid strenuous exercise and activities for 4 to 6 weeks.
- Social and employment activities can be resumed within 7 to 14 days.

INCISION CARE

- You may shower only after your post-operative appointment (usually 4 days post-operatively) when your original dressing has been replaced with water-resistant dressing and/or Micropore.
- Avoid exposing your scars to the sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use sunblock – regardless of the weather – if you plan to go outdoors or not.
- Apply Micropore to the incision lines for 3 months. Change every 7 to 10 days. Do not remove the tape every day as it will cause irritation of the surrounding skin.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect through Micropore daily for signs of infection or oozing.

- DO NOT USE ANY CREAMS CONTAINING VITAMIN E TO TREAT THE INCISION AREAS FOR THE FIRST 3 MONTHS.
- Incision areas may be massaged through the Micropore for the first 3 months.
- ScarScience, available from the therapists, should be applied from 6 weeks post-operatively, over the Micropore for another 6 weeks, and then on the incision directly for another 3 months post-operatively.
- No soaking in baths or swimming in a swimming pool until your incisions have completely healed.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Discomfort will be maximal in the first 7 to 10 days, improving each day thereafter.
- You may experience temporary pain, soreness, numbness, dry breast skin, swelling, discolouration and incision discomfort.
- You may notice swelling under the arm where the lymph nodes have been removed - there may be a build-up of lymph fluid. This is normal and not a cause for great concern. The fluid will be drained at your post-op visit and there are measures to control and/or help with this.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Drains will be removed when drainage is less than 30 ml for 24 hours.
- Most of the sutures are buried and will dissolve in 6 to 8 weeks. There may be suture extrusion or a suture 'poking' through your skin. Do not be concerned as the suture can be 'shaved' down at your next post-operative visit to make it more comfortable.

WHEN TO CALL

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications, such as rash, nausea, headache and vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 37°C.
- If you have any drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odour.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that does not stop with light pressure.

EMERGENCY NUMBER: 072 543 5998

Please visit the website for more information.
www.doctortoogood.co.za