



DR JONATHAN
TOOGOOD

PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEON
Mb Chb FC Plast Surg (SA) | Practice no: 0230197

MASTECTOMY/ RECONSTRUCTION

PRE & POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- Please advise the doctor if you are taking any blood thinning medication (e.g. Warfarin, Disprin, Aspirin, etc.)
- This will need to be discontinued prior to surgery as per your doctor's instructions.
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure raises the risk of bleeding complications in all forms of surgery – please ensure your blood pressure is well controlled prior to your surgical date.
- DO NOT take any of the following medications prior to surgery:
 - Anti-inflammatories (e.g. Brufen, Ibuprofen, Myprodol, Voltaren, etc.)
 - Homeopathic medications (e.g. Arnica, Rescue Remedy, St John's Wort)
 - Vitamin E (oral or topical)
- Prepare your skin for 3 weeks before surgery with Dermalac Lotion and Vitamin A, C & E Body Oil from Environ. Dr Toogood will advise if this is necessary for you.
- Take a bath or shower with antibacterial soap (or Bioscrub/AcuSanX) on the morning of your admission.
- Do not apply any body lotion.
- You should not eat or drink anything for 6 hours prior to surgery.
- If you are a smoker – NO SMOKING for 3 months prior to surgery.
- Bring comfortable cotton underwear.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- You are likely to stay in hospital for 3 to 5 days, sometimes longer.
- If you are staying at our Recovery Retreat, you will be transported with a registered ambulance service, from the recovery ward to the Recovery Retreat. You will have trained Nursing staff with you after your surgery.
- You will have “drains” in situ after your surgery (a thin pipe leading from each breast into a drainage bottle). This collects blood and serous fluid from the operation site. The fluid draining can change from dark red, to light red, to a yellow colour. It may have particles in it. This is all normal.
- We need to measure the amount of fluid drained in a 24-hour period, so we will ask you to document this. When the fluid volume is below a certain amount, the drain will be removed. We will be in touch with you daily while you have drains in place.
- You will need someone to drive you home after your surgery and help you at home for 1 to 2 days.
- You will need plenty of rest.
- Decreased activity and pain medication may promote constipation, so you may want to add more fruit and fibre to your diet and be sure to increase your fluid intake. It is advisable to take Movicol daily until your habits return to normal.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

ACTIVITIES

- Start walking as soon as possible – this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- It is a good idea to have a small bag with long straps going over your shoulder and head - to put your drains in. This allows you to be hands free. When doing this, please ensure there are no kinks in the tubing.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications.
- 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 3 to 4 weeks.

INCISION CARE

- You may shower only after your post-operative appointment (usually 4 to 7 days post-operatively).
- During this time, you may have a “basin wash” or sit in a shallow bath, but will need to ensure that your plasters do not get wet.
- Do not soak in the bath while sutures or drains are in place.
- Most of the sutures are buried and dissolve in 6 to 8 weeks.
- 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 another 6 weeks during the day.
- After your first post-operative appointment, your plasters will be waterproof, and you will be able to shower.
- 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 when Dr Toogood advises it is safe to do so.
- ScarScience/Scar Repair, available from MASC Laser Clinic, should be applied from 6 weeks post-operatively, over the Micropore and then on the incision directly, when you are no longer using Micropore.
- ScarScience/Scar Repair helps with the prevention of hypertrophic and keloid scarring. It should be used at least 3 to 6 months post-operatively.
- 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.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Discomfort will be maximal in the first 5 days, improving each day thereafter.
- You may experience temporary pain, swelling (extending to your sides and underarm area), numbness, dry breast skin, discoloration and incision discomfort.

APPEARANCE

- Scars will be red for 6 to 9 months. After that, they will fade and soften.
- Scars will usually be present around the nipples and under the breast in an “anchor” pattern, unless an alternative surgical technique is more suited to your specific surgery.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Drains will be removed when drainage is less than 30ml for 24 hours.
- Most of the sutures are buried and will dissolve in 6 to 8 weeks.
- Any stitches will be removed in 7 to 10 days.
- ScarScience/Scar Repair must be applied on the incision from 6 weeks post-operatively to help with the prevention of hypertrophic and keloid scarring. It should be used at least 3 to 6 months post-operatively.

WHEN TO CALL

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- 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 38°C.
- If you have any drainage from the incisions or notice an 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