

Brachioplasty (Arm Lift) Post-Operative Care

Instructions

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin unless approved by your physician.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Even when not taking pain medications, no alcohol for 3 weeks as it causes fluid retention.
- 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, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Social activities can be resumed 10-14 days after surgery.
- Avoid strenuous exercise and activities such as sports for 4 weeks.

Incision Care

- If drainage tube(s) have been placed, you may shower 48 hours after removal.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep steri-strips on.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.

What to Expect

- Postoperative pain is minimal.
- Your arms will be wrapped with ace wraps for compression immediately after surgery.
- You will be required to purchase a compression garment after surgery that is specific for your procedure.
- You will need to wear this garment 4-6 weeks after surgery. This is determined by your physician.
- There will be swelling and discoloration.
- There may be numbness around the operative areas.

Appearance

- There will be a scar in the underarm area; this scar will be hidden when arm is against body.
- If incision extends down to and around elbow, scar may be visible.

Follow-Up Care

- Some sutures will be absorbed; remaining sutures will generally be removed in 1-2 weeks.

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, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.