

# Corpus Christi Institute of Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery

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## POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ABDOMINOPLASTY/ LOWER BODY LIFT

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest and increase your fluid intake.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more ripe fruit to your diet. Prunes and prune juice work well for most.
- Take pain medications as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Refrain from drinking alcohol for three weeks following surgery, even when no longer taking pain medications, as alcohol causes fluid retention.
- If you regularly take vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke or consume nicotine, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.
- **Please get Arnica in the pill form. Take once a day starting the day of surgery once you get home. Continue taking it for 2 weeks post op. This will help with bruising.**

### ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS

- Start walking as soon as possible with assistance the day of surgery, this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots. Starting the day after surgery, walk 300 feet three times per day with assistance daily.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Do not drive until you have full range of motion in your legs and no discomfort in your abdomen when lifting your legs.
- No lifting greater than 5 lbs. for six weeks. Avoid straining of abdominal muscles, strenuous exercise and activities are restricted for 6 weeks.
- Sexual activity can be resumed in two weeks unless otherwise specified by your surgeon.

### INCISION CARE

- You may shower 48 hours after surgery.
- Keep steri-strips on. Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for sign of infection. No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place for two weeks.
- Place daily soft dressing over incisions and around drain sites to wick away moisture and prevent irritation by garment along the incision line.
- Sleep with back elevated (a recliner works very well) and four pillows under your knees to decrease tension on your incision.

Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Corpus Christi Institute of Cosmetic & Plastic Surgery  
5642 Esplanade Drive  
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### EXPECTATIONS

- You may experience temporary pain, soreness, numbness of abdominal skin, incision discomfort.
- Maximum discomfort will occur the first few days.
- You will have bruising and swelling of the abdomen. The majority of bruising and swelling will subside in 6-8 weeks.
- You may feel tired for several weeks or months.

### APPEARANCE AND SCAR CARE

- Flatter, firmer abdomen with narrower waistline.
- You will walk slightly bent forward and gradually return to normal posture over the next 3 weeks.
- Scars will be reddened looking for six months. In time, these usually soften and fade.
- Please start using your scar cream two weeks after surgery or as instructed by your surgeon.
- Avoid exposure of scar to sunlight for 6-12 months. If unavoidable, use sunblock (SPF 30 or greater) with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide.
- Massage scars ten minutes at a time, three times daily while using silicone strips.

### DRAIN CARE

- Empty drain bulb 3 times a day and record outputs in mL (milliliters) noting time of day and drain amount. Make sure to record each drain's output separately.
- It is normal for drain outputs to vary and for clots to be in tube and bulb.
- Do not disconnect bulb from tube.
- **Do not push in or pull on the drain tube at its entrance on the skin.**
- See additional attachment for more instructions and additional drain log.

### FOLLOW UP CARE

- Your post-operative appointment will be scheduled before surgery for your convenience.

### 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 such as rash, nausea, headache, or vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have 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.

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