



Breast Surgery, Lumpectomy, Mastectomy And/or Lymph Node Removal

Diet

- Start with clear liquids to prevent nausea or vomiting (soup, Jell-o, juices, popsicles, carbonated beverages and water).
- Advance to your regular diet tomorrow.

Medication

- Take pain medications as prescribed by your doctor. Take crackers and toast with pain medication.
- _____
If antibiotics were ordered take all of the pills as directed on the bottle.
- _____
- Take stool softener as prescribed by your doctor.
- _____

Activity

- Rest as needed.
- No heavy lifting or strenuous activity.
- Divide your grocery bags into several lightweight bags if carried with the arm on your operated side or carry them with the other arm.
- When vacuum cleaning or using your arm, stop frequently to rest the arm and allow the muscles to recover from being worked.
- Treat your operated side like a sports injury - Use your arm carefully, "baby" the arm and whenever possible use the other arm.
- You may begin driving on: _____ or when you STOP taking pain medication. (Day determined by your surgeon)
- You may return to work on: _____. (Day determined by your surgeon)

Bathing

- If you have a drain, you will be taking sponge baths for the first few days at home until your drainage tube is removed.
- You may begin taking a shower on: _____ (Day determined by your surgeon).
- When you shower, **avoid** letting the force of the water run on your incision, pat with a clean towel to dry, do not rub your incision. Keep the incision area clean at all times.

Dressing

- Keep your dressing clean and dry for 48 hours then remove it if you don't have a drain.
- If steri-strips (thin strips of white tape) were used, keep them in place until your appointment with your doctor. They may fall off on their own in about 10 days.



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- If you have skin glue, a topical adhesive, this will naturally slough off your skin in 5 to 10 days. Do not rub, scratch, or pick at the skin glue. Do not apply any medications or any products to wound while the skin glue is in place. You may shower only, after 24 hrs if not otherwise contraindicated.
- If a drain was placed in your wound, empty as needed and record the amount of drainage. (See instructions below). Bring this record with you to your next appointment. Your nurse will provide you with the recording sheet.

What to Expect

- If you have had a Sentinel Lymph Node biopsy, your urine may be blue.
- To feel sleepy during the day, but not excessively.
- You may have some nausea or vomiting, but this should not persist.
- You may have some discomfort, but this should not be excessive.
- You may have a sore throat, if you had general anesthesia.

Miscellaneous

- No alcohol or driving for 24 hours after surgery or while taking pain medicine.
- Do not make important personal or business decisions for 24 hours.
- You should have a responsible adult with you for the rest of the day and night.

Special Instructions

- Do not take aspirin or aspirin compounds for 48 hours.
- If a drain was placed and you empty more than 150cc of bloody drainage 3 or more times daily, call your doctor.
- Social Services offer counseling for patients and families with emotional concerns. It also provides referrals to Kaiser and Community Resources.
- For more information call (408) 851-7080

Precautions

If your lymph nodes have been removed:

1. No blood pressure on the arm on your operated side from now on.
2. No blood samples, injections, vaccinations, or any other needle sticks on your arm on your operated side from now on.
3. Avoid elastic cuffs on blouses and nightgowns.
4. Wear watches or jewelry loosely, if at all, on the operated arm.
5. To prevent infection:
 - Wash cuts promptly, treat them with antibacterial medication and cover them with a sterile dressing. Check often for redness, soreness, and swelling.



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- Report any signs of infection to your surgeon immediately.
- Wear protective gloves when gardening or using strong detergents.

6. Use an electric razor for underarm shaving to reduce the risk of nicks or scratches.

7. Avoid burns while cooking and sunbathing.

Drain Care

Sterile Suction Drain, the device that drains fluid from your incision, may be in place for a few days when you are at home.

How to empty the drain reservoir:

1. Before and after you empty the drain reservoir, wash your hands well with soap and running water. Pay special attention to rubbing the fingers, fingernails, palms, and the backs of your hands. Hand washing is an important step to help prevent infection.
2. Empty your drain reservoir when it is half full or at least once a day and record the amount of drainage.
3. Pour the contents of the reservoir into a measuring cup, record the amount of drainage.
4. Squeeze the sides of the reservoir to remove all air and create a gentle suction. Reinsert the cap. The drain works properly only when the sides are flattened and light suction is created.
5. Pin the reservoir to your clothing to prevent pulling on the tubing.
6. Wash your hands.

When your surgeon removes the drain, it is normal to have a small amount of fluid collect under the skin. If a large amount of fluid collects it is called Seroma. Over time the body will reabsorb this fluid or your surgeon may have to withdraw the fluid with a needle.

Movement

Though you should be cautious of using the arm on the operated side, it is also important to use your arm so that the shoulder joint does not get stiff. Your surgeon will instruct you as to when you may begin exercises.

Unless Otherwise Ordered by Your Surgeon, You May:

- Comb your hair and wash your face with the hand on your operative side.
- Roll your shoulder in a circle periodically throughout the day.
- When the drain is removed from your incision, your surgeon will instruct you to begin additional exercises.
- If you have had surgery because of breast cancer, do not take hormone drugs without discussing it with your surgeon.



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Possible Problems

Call your doctor if you are:

- Unable to drink liquids in the morning because of nausea.
- Unable to urinate 8 hours after your surgery.
- Your temperature is greater than 101.5⁰ F.
- Excessive bleeding or unexpected drainage from your incision.
- You notice excessive redness or swelling at the incision site.
- Wound edges open or separate.
- Your pain is not relieved by your pain medication.

Telephone numbers to call with Problems or Questions

Surgery Clinic: Department 286

Mon – Fri, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(408) 851-2000

Medical Offices Call Center (if clinic is not open)

Mon – Fri, Weekends and Holidays
(408) 554-9800

Emergency Department

Open 24 hours
(408) 851-5300

Anesthesia Service Line

Open 24 hours; your call will be returned within one business day.
(408) 851-6020

Follow-up Appointment

Name:

Place:

Date:

Time:

Return to Work:

Medical Provider: