



Nipple Reconstruction

Post Operative Instructions

After your surgery

- Keep the dressing clean and dry for 2-3 days following surgery. In most cases, the dressing can then be removed and the area washed lightly with soap and water; do not soak for long periods of time until incisions are well-healed.
- Following removal of the dressing, the area should be kept clean. A gauze dressing may be reapplied for protection and padding for about one week after surgery.
- Generally, It is not necessary to apply any ointments or topical compounds to the incision; doing so can inhibit normal healing.
- If tattooing has also been performed, antibiotic ointment (Neosporin, Bacitracin, etc.) should be applied to the tattooed area 1-2 times per day and a gauze dressing should be placed over the area. This should be done for about one week after surgery. Usually, no dressing is required after this time.
- You may wear a soft bra that will not traumatize or compress the reconstruction. After healing has occurred, any bra type is allowed.
- Avoid aspirin-containing products or anti-inflammatory medications (Motrin, Aleve, etc.) for 2-3 days after surgery, as these may increase the risk of bleeding immediately after surgery. Tylenol is safe immediately after surgery and may be alternated with (or used in place of) prescribed pain medication.
- It is usually a good idea to avoid strenuous activity or exercise for the first 7-10 days after surgery.
- Driving should be avoided if you are taking narcotic pain medications or if there is still significant pain from the surgery. Driving while these conditions are present could result in an unsafe driving situation.

When to call us

- **Signs of infection.** Normal surgical pain and swelling should generally begin to decrease 2-3 days after surgery. Signs of infection include increasing redness, pain, warmth, swelling, or pus draining at the surgical site. Additionally, fevers and chills can be signs of infection. If you suspect infection at the surgical site, contact your provider as soon as possible to determine the appropriate treatment course.
- **Signs of active bleeding.** Drainage of a small or moderate amount of blood-tinged fluid following surgery is not uncommon and is usually does not indicate active bleeding. Signs of bleeding include sudden increased swelling or lump at the surgical site, drainage of blood from the wound, or severe bruising around the surgical site. If there appears to be active bleeding, direct pressure on the site can be helpful. If you suspect significant bleeding following surgery, contact your provider to determine appropriate treatment.
- **Signs of poor wound healing.** Wound healing problems usually appear as separation of the wound edges at the surgical site. This can be caused by a variety of factors and is usually a problem that can be managed by dressing changes and wound care. Keep the area clean and cover with a gauze dressing. Contact your provider to discuss need for further evaluation or treatment options.

If you have any problems or questions, please call us at (408) 851-2000.