Reconstructive Breast Surgery

Thank you for choosing Georgia Regents Health System for your health care needs. This information is to help answer some of the questions you may have about your operation and to give you instructions to follow during your recovery period. If you have any other questions, please ask your doctor or nurse.

Activity
- After major reconstructive surgery, you will be asked to return to normal activity with assistance. Early ambulation can minimize complications.
- Please do not lift anything heavier than 5 pounds or engage in vigorous exercise for at least 6 weeks.

Wound Care
- Healing will continue for several weeks as swelling resolves. Dressings will be applied to your incisions. You may be asked to wear supportive garments to secure the dressings. Avoid tape to the healing skin if at all possible. We have found that abdominal pads, Kotex pads, or panty liners make very good dressings. If other dressing supplies are required, please ask your care provider for a prescription.
- Drains may be placed under the skin to collect excess fluid. These drains need to be emptied and the drainage recorded every 12 hours. Generally, we asked that you apply Bacitracin ointment to the insertion sites twice daily. If the drainage is less than 25 cc per 24 hours for 2 days, please notify your doctor. The drain may be ready to come out.
- It is possible for fluid to accumulate even after the drains come out. If you notice a pocket of fluid or an enlarging area around your incision. Please notify your doctor.
- You may shower 24 hours after the drains are removed. Use a mild soap and water. If steri-strips are placed, pat dry. The strips will gradually fall off.
- Sutures will be removed as determined by your physician.
- Monitor your surgical sites for any skin color changes. If the surrounding skin becomes gray, dusky, or black it may indicate an alteration in blood supply. If this occurs, please notify your doctor.
- When donor sites have completely healed, please apply a moisturizer 3 times daily and use a highly protective sunscreen. This will help maintain the integrity of the new skin.

Medications
- Discomfort is common and can be controlled with medication. Please take your pain medications as prescribed. Your pain will gradually improve and you will be able to decrease the amount of pain medications you are taking. If pain persists, please tell us so that we can adjust your therapy.
- You may be asked to take antibiotics to reduce the risk of infection. If ordered, please take as prescribed and monitor the abdomen for signs of infection.

Diet
- You may resume your usual diet as soon as you feel like it. Taking your medications with food may decrease the potential for nausea and vomiting. A diet rich in protein and vitamin C can help the healing process. A daily multivitamin is advised to promote healing.
- Smoking has a NEGATIVE effect on wound healing and leads to potential skin breakdown and a poor result. It is advisable that patients avoid smoking before and after surgery to produce the best possible surgical outcome.
Call your doctor if
- you develop a sudden increase or large amount of blood from your wound
- you develop a bad smell or odor from the wound
- you notice redness, warmth, or increased soreness around the wound
- you develop a fever of 101.5 degrees or higher

Follow Up
We will give you an appointment to return to the clinic. It is important that you keep this appointment so that your doctor can be sure that you are healing and arrange any further care that you need.

If you need to talk to your doctor, you can call:
Days: 706-721-2198
Evenings, Nights, & Weekends: Ask to speak to the Plastic Surgeon on call

1120 15th Street, Augusta, Georgia 30912 706-721-CARE grhealth.org
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