



Breast Reconstruction Post Surgery Instructions **Implant Based Reconstruction**

After your surgery

- Leave all dressings in place until you have your first post-operative appointment.
- Make sure that dressings stay dry and clean; you may sponge bathe around the dressings
- If you were placed into a surgical bra, wear this day and night for the first 4 weeks. It may be removed for laundering and for bathing after the dressings are removed. It can also be adjusted to your comfort (it should not be too loose or too tight)
- Do not lie in bed for long periods of time after surgery. You should be up and walking around several times a day starting on the first day.
- No running, workouts, or lifting over 10lbs for 6 weeks after surgery. This includes vigorous house cleaning or yard work.
- No dedicated upper body or pectoralis exercises for 6 months post surgery.

Things to expect after surgery

- Swelling & tenderness in the entire breast area, in the sternum and along the ribs.
- It is normal for the breast skin to feel numb. Some of the sensation will return over time (6-12months) however this will not be the same sensation that you had prior to surgery.
- The dressings will be removed in the surgeon's office typically within the first week after surgery. Please leave the dressings in place until you see your surgeon.
- You will have steri-strips over the incisions that will stay in place after the dressings are removed. These will peel off on their own over 2-3 weeks.
- If you have a drain it will need to be emptied daily. The nurses at the hospital will show you how to do this. Please keep a record of how much is coming out of each drain every 24 hours (total the amount for each drain for every 24hr period). These will be removed typically 1-3 weeks after surgery. The drains can unfortunately be quite uncomfortable for some patients.
- You can shower 3 days after the drains are removed (not before), over the steri strips. However do not immerse the incisions in a bath, pool, hot tub or any other sitting water for 6 weeks post surgery, or until your surgeon says this is okay.
- After the steri-strips fall off, apply Vaseline or scar gel (carried in the office, Skin Medica or Vivier) to the incisions morning and night. Do this for several months after the surgery. Additionally, use Vaseline extra on the incisions if they start to look dry. This will keep the incisions well moisturized.
- The incisions can be massaged starting 3-4 weeks post surgery to help to soften them. Please note that the scars will take at least 12 months to fade and flatten.
- Do not massage the implants. Please leave these alone. It will take 6-12month for the implants to settle.

Reasons to call the office (604-281-3866 during office hours) or go to the emergency department (after hours)

- If the breast size increases in size significantly and you develop increasing pain and bruising over a short period of time. This may mean you are bleeding. Seek medical attention.
- You will have some redness right around the incisions, which is a normal part of the healing process. However, if the redness starts spreading and the incisions and breast become very tender, you might have an infection. Seek medical attention.