

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Top Surgery

Our goal is to ensure your safety, help you have the best outcome possible and help you feel comfortable during your recovery. Please follow these instructions on how to take care of yourself following your procedure.

GOING HOME:

- After your surgery, your surgeon will check on you before you are discharged and the nursing staff will ensure you are ready to go home. Please arrange to have someone drive you home the day of your surgery. To ensure your safety, you are required to have a responsible adult stay with you for the first 24 hours after your surgery.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY:

- After surgery, it is important for you to rest. Please keep your head and shoulders elevated on at least 2 pillows for the first 24 hours, this is for your comfort and to decrease swelling.
- It is equally important that you move your body to ensure you do not get blood clots. In the days that follow, go for frequent short walks around the house to keep your body moving. Your aim should be to be up walking every waking hour of the day.
- You may experience nausea from the anesthesia following your surgery. You may wish to start with clear fluids and slowly proceed to a soft diet when you are able to do so.
- It is also very important that you stay hydrated, so please ensure you drink plenty of liquids (non-alcoholic).

THE GARMENT:

- You have been provided with a garment to hold your dressings and support your surgery in the optimal position. Please wear it 24 hours a day, including to sleep at night, for the first 6 weeks. The garment should be tight enough to feel supportive, but should not cause puckering or indentations in your skin., or restrict your breathing. Please let our office know if the garment provided is uncomfortable or fits poorly.
- You may wash the garment as required, but while you are not wearing the garment, please be sure you keep your movement/activity level to a minimum.

INCISIONS:

- It is possible that your surgeon may place drains. This is to prevent fluid from collecting under the skin. Fluid will range in colour from purple/red to pink/yellow. Your nurse will instruct you on how to empty the drains and record the volume at home. The drains will be removed when daily total volume is less than 20-30cc for two consecutive days (usually between 5 – 10 days after your surgery). After your drains are removed, you may notice pink/yellow fluid leaking from the drain holes or incisions. Contact our office if this does not slow after 2 more days. If you have drains, please keep the sites dry and sponge bath only.
- Sponge bath only for the first 2 days following surgery, being careful not to get the dressing wet.
- If you do not have drains, you may shower on the third day following surgery. Remove the outer padding and gauze (yellow or red drainage on the dressing is normal). Please keep the tape on the incisions; this will be removed during your post op visit. Shower normally, then pat the tape dry or gently blow-dry.
- If there is drainage, cover your incisions with gauze and put your garment back on.

- Your sutures will dissolve on their own, but please contact the office if you have any questions or concerns.
- It is a good idea to protect scars from the sun (with clothing or good sunscreen) for at least 12 months to prevent burning and permanent darkening of the area.

PAIN & MEDICATION:

- It is normal to have pain and discomfort following your procedure. Please take following medication as directed:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Tylenol
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ibuprofen
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	Prescription Medication: <u>Celebrex (Celecoxib)</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prescription Medication: <u>Morphine</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prescription Medication: <u>Antibiotic</u>

- Please take Tylenol and Celebrex (Celecoxib) as directed after your surgery. Do not wait until you are uncomfortable before taking your next dose. Maintain baseline comfort with these medications for the first few days after your surgery. If you require additional relief after taking Tylenol and Celebrex, you may take morphine or another prescribed pain medication as directed.
- If you have been provided with a prescription for antibiotics, please ensure you take the medication as directed.
- If you have worsening pain not controlled by your medication, please contact our office for instructions.

SWELLING AND BRUISING:

- Swelling and bruising will peak 2-3 days following surgery. This should reduce significantly over the first 2 weeks. Your skin will feel slightly tight and your chest will feel fuller during this time.

ACTIVITIES:

- As mentioned above, it is important for you to rest. Please keep your head and shoulders elevated on at least 2 pillows for the first 24 hours. It is equally important that you move your body to ensure you do not get blood clots. Go for frequent short walks around the house to keep your body moving and avoid blood clots. Your aim should be to be up walking every waking hour of the day.
- For the first 48 hours keep your arm movements to a minimum. Do not use your arms to support your body or lift anything heavy. Keep your elbows tight to your body to feed and dress yourself and go to the washroom. Don't raise your elbows up. Keep your hands together when getting up from bed or a chair and instead use your legs or abdominal muscles. On the third day after your surgery you may start increasing your arm movements gradually, eventually raising them over your head. There should be no strenuous activity for 2 weeks.
- It is important that you sleep on your back as much as possible for the first 2-4 weeks following your surgery, depending on your specific case.
- Please do not lift anything more than 10 lbs (4.5 kg) for 6 weeks (including children).
- Please no smoking. Smoking may increase the chance of complications.
- Do not swim in lakes, pools or use hot tubs for at least 2 weeks following surgery.
- Do not exercise your arms or chest with weights or go jogging for at least 6 weeks after surgery. Your surgeon may advise you on other specific restrictions based on your case. However, low impact activities such as walking are strongly encouraged.
- For a better scar result, you may wish to avoid repetitive reaching exercises for several months following your surgery.
- It generally takes up to 6-8 weeks to feel normal again and resume regular activities. Please ask your surgeon if you have any questions about activity level during the healing process.

WORK:

- You will likely be ready to return to work within 1-4 weeks depending on your occupation and type of physical exertion required. If you require a medical note for your employer, please contact your Patient Care Coordinator and they will be happy to help you.

DRIVING:

- You must be pain free and off all pain medication before driving. You may wish to take a licensed adult with you for your first short trip.

THE RESULT:

- Surgical swelling will settle in 3 months and the final chest contour will become apparent. Your incisions will fade and soften over the next 18 months.

If you have any of the following, call our office (during business hours), your family doctor or present to the Emergency Department:

Signs of Infection:

- Pus-like drainage from the incision, grey or green.
- Redness that spreads beyond the incision.
- New pain, getting worse after 3 or 4 days.
- Fever, chills, sweats, aches and pains (flu-like symptoms).

Signs Of Blood Collection:

- Rapid swelling, pain and firmness.

Questions not addressed by this handout

Special Instructions: _____

POSTOPERATIVE CALL:

- The nurse assigned to your care may call you the day after your surgery to check in. Please let her know of any questions or concerns.

FOR AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCIES:

- Call the Queensway Carleton Hospital at 613-721-2000 and the Plastic Surgeon on-call will be paged.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT:

- Your Patient Care Coordinator will call you to confirm your appointment. Please call us at 613-232-7777 if you have any questions or concerns.

YOUR APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR: _____