

## Instructions to Follow after Breast Surgery

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

After your breast surgery, please follow the instructions below. Pay attention to the checked areas.

### Follow-up Appointments and Pathology Reports

Call your physician's office at 904-202-7300 for an appointment 7-14 days after surgery with Dr. \_\_\_\_\_.

Your appointment will be at \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.

Your pathology report will be discussed at the time of your postoperative visit.

### Special Instructions

Report to the closest Emergency Center and bring this form with you if you have:

- Chest or abdominal pain that cannot be relieved
- Hives, difficulty breathing, wheezing
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Call your doctor if:

- Affected extremity becomes cold to touch, tingly or numb.
- Affected area becomes reddened, warm/hot, tingly or blistered.
- Affected area has increased drainage or swelling.
- You have a fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or above.
- Pain is not relieved by the medication you were instructed to take.
- See drain information on back.
- Other

### Diet/Liquids

- DO NOT drink alcoholic beverages for 24 hours after surgery. Begin with liquids and light foods (Jell-O, soups, etc.) Progress to your normal diet.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity

- DO NOT make important (personal or business) decisions for 24 hours after surgery.
- DO NOT sign legal documents for 24 hours after surgery.
- DO NOT drive or operate hazardous machinery for 24 hours after surgery. You may start driving after you stop taking pain medications, and when you feel comfortable moving quickly should you need to make a sudden stop or turn.

- DO NOT engage in sports, heavy work or heavy lifting until your physician gives you permission. Light walking is fine. Generally, this time frame is 2-6 weeks.
- If you have a drain, once it is removed, follow the exercises in your booklet. You may feel uncomfortable lifting your arm above your head, but it is safe to do so.
- Resume normal activities.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wound Care

Remove the dressing 24 hours after surgery or per physician's instructions.

The little tapes on the incision (called Steri-Strips) will stay in place for a few days. They hold the edges of the skin together. In about 1-2 weeks, the strips will start to peel off. You may cut the curled edges with a scissor to prevent them from getting caught in your clothes. The steri-strips will be removed at your first post-op visit, do not remove them on your own.

The sutures (stitches) under the skin hold all the tissues together and will dissolve on their own.

You may see some bruising that may take some time to go away. You also may see swelling in the area of surgery and the rest of the breast. A firm area under the incision is a healing ridge and is noticeable in about 10 days. It will soften and go away in a few months. You might be more comfortable sleeping in a bra for 2-3 nights or more.

## Drains

Upon discharge, you will be taught in the care of your drain(s).

1. Keep the suction on the drain(s).
2. Clean your drain site with soapy water or hydrogen peroxide. If there is any drainage from the drain site, you may place a dressing to absorb that drainage.
3. There may be strands of fiber or blood clots in the drainage tube; this is normal.
4. Perform line stripping as instructed to remove clots from the line.
5. If you have more than one drain, each should remain until drainage is less than 30 cc per drain in a 24-hour period.

\*\*\* Usually it takes 7 -14 days for the drainage to decrease to this amount, but some drains may take longer.

## Call Your Physician's Office:

- For an appointment for drain removal. On most days we are able to accommodate you on the same day or next day.
- If your drain does not keep a suction.
- If there is leaking around the drain site.
- When your drainage is less than 30 cc over 24 hours.

## Showers, Baths, Swimming

You may shower 48 hours after surgery. You can let water hit your back and roll over to your front and incision. No direct shower stream to the incision. You may use soap over the area.

DO NOT rub the incision; pat the area dry. The tapes will not be harmed in the shower.

DO NOT soak in the bathtub or swim for two weeks. No wound submersion.

## Medications

Use caution when walking, driving and climbing, as dizziness may occur.

- Take prescriptions as directed. Over-the-counter pain medications, such as Tylenol can be used in place of your prescriptions. Use an ice bag on and off for 24 to 36 hours.
- DO NOT take aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn) or warfarin (Coumadin) unless advised by your physician. **Ask your care team if your physician will allow you to use ibuprofen or naproxen in place of your prescription.**

## Questions:

You may reach your nurse 8 am – 5 pm, Monday through Friday.

If you are a patient of Dr. Desai or Dr. Pezzi, call (904) 202-7259.

If you are a patient of Dr. Defazio call (904) 202-7183.

If you are a patient of Dr. Samiian, call (904) 202-7686.

After hours and on the weekends, call (904) 202-7300 and ask to speak with the on-call physician.

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