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Breast Surgery

Postoperative Information

Follow-up Appointment

- Date:
- Location: ☐ Rooms ☐ GP ☐ Other: _____

General Preoperative Advice

- Prior to surgery, take time to ensure you have planned for your recovery. This may include organising meals, delegating physical tasks, or ensuring your medical certificates are in place for work. Proper planning will ensure you maximise having a restful and uneventful recovery.
- Patient Information Handouts specific to your procedure are in your personalised folder. If you lose these, there are copies on our website under the 'Patient Resources' tab.
- Start taking vitamin C 1 gram daily 4 weeks prior to surgery. This helps with the healing process.
- Ensure you are eating a healthy balanced diet rich in lean protein, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. Probiotics are also helpful in the perioperative phase when you are taking antibiotics.
- Observe fasting guidelines: fast from all food for a minimum of 6 hours before hospital admission time. Water only is allowed up to 2 hours before your admission.
- Ensure you bring your postsurgery garment to hospital with you.
- You should not have breast surgery while smoking or vaping. Smoking slows wound healing, increases the chance of infection and compromises your results. See your GP for help with smoking cessation.

Dressing Advice

- Breast Reduction or Breast Lift: keep the dressings clean and dry until your first postoperative review. You can shower from the waist down and use a flannel above the waist, protecting the dressings from contact with water.
- Breast Augmentation: you are able to shower after 3 days, making sure you dry the dressings completely with a hair dryer after washing.
- Dressings should support the breasts during the healing phase. After breast reduction and lift, the breasts are usually supported with dressings placed at the end of surgery. For breast augmentation, garments can be purchased through the practice. During the healing phase and after dressing removal, maternity bras which open at the front and do not have an underwire are another good choice. The bra should be snug, but not overly tight. A crop top can be used over the bra or dressings for comfort.

Postoperative Restrictions

- No driving for the first week after surgery.
- Avoid an underwire for 6 weeks as the wire can disturb the wound and interfere with the blood supply to the nipple.

- Avoid intense physical activity after surgery for a minimum of 6 weeks. Exertion increases your blood pressure which can lead to bleeding, while tension on the wound edges can lead to dehiscence (separation of the skin edges).
- No heavy lifting for 6 weeks. The visible wounds need to heal, but in addition the breast needs to heal internally. Gentle activities such as walking are encouraged.

Bleeding

There is occasionally some 'strike-through' present on the dressings. Removing the dressing exposes the sterile wound to infection. If ooze is noted, attempt direct pressure for 10-15 minutes, ideally with something cold (such as ice wrapped in a towel). If the bleeding does not settle or the breast becomes tender or swollen, see Concerns.

Medications

Pain relief and antibiotics will be prescribed prior to discharge. Please take them as directed.

Infection

Infection can present as increased pain, redness, ooze or a foul smell. If you have concerns regarding infection please call the rooms so we can arrange for an expedited review.

Scar Care

After removal of sutures, application of a scar reduction agent can help improve the final scar. We sell a range of Scar Care products in the practice which can be purchased before surgery or after your first dressing change. You should use these products for a minimum of 3 months. Consult your Scar Advice handout for more detailed information.

Final Shape

Remember that the breasts 'settle' during the healing phase. The final shape of your breasts is usually seen approximately 6 months after surgery, with most changes occurring in the first 3 months. At the 6-month mark, a mammogram should be performed to establish the new baseline for your breast imaging.

Concerns

If you have concerns, please contact the practice directly on (03) 6776 0150. In an emergency or out of hours please present to or contact one of the following medical centres.

- Urgent Care Centre at Newstead Medical, Launceston (03) 6338 9898
- Launceston Medicare Urgent Care Clinic at The Hub, Launceston (03) 6310 8309
- Urgent Care Clinic at MyClinic Plus, Devonport (03) 6406 5492
- Launceston General Hospital (03) 6777 6777


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