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POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

INSTRUCTIONS

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Even when not taking pain medications, no alcohol for 3 weeks as it causes fluid retention.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

ACTIVITIES

- Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Unless stated on this form, discuss your time off work with your surgeon.
- Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms.
- No overhead lifting, strenuous sports or sexual activity for 3-6 weeks.

INCISION CARE

- You may shower after your first post-op appt..
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep steri-strips on; replace if they come off.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- You are likely to feel tired and sore for 1-2 weeks.
- Normal sensation to the breast cannot be restored; in time, some feeling may return.

APPEARANCE

- Most scars will fade substantially over time, 1-2 years.
- Reconstructed breast may feel firmer and look rounder or flatter than natural breast.
- Reconstructed breast may not match natural breast.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- If surgical drain was used, it will be removed in 1-2 weeks.
- Most stitches are removed in 7-10 days.

WHEN TO CALL

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.

For medical questions, please call:

- **909-798-9950** Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- For Emergency calls - Dr. Punjabi at **909-213-6183**