

Breast Lumpectomy or Partial Mastectomy With or Without Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy

Post-Operative Instructions

Elizabeth Henderson, MD

Your first post-operative visit will be approximately 10-14 days after surgery unless other instructions are given. Please call the office after discharge from the hospital to confirm your appointment.

Wound Care: You may change the gauze and tape at any time after you return home. You may shower but do not soak in the tub, pool, ocean, or a river. Do not scrub over the dermabond or steri-strips. Do not place any lotion or ointment on the incisions. You can apply an ice pack to the area for 20 minutes out of every hour as needed to help with swelling. It may also help to wear a bra around the clock and to even sleep in one. **Call the office if there are any signs of infection such as pain, redness, or persistent drainage.**

Diet: You may resume a normal solid diet as soon as you are home but the most important thing is to listen to your body. It is normal to not feel like eating a huge meal at a time so eating four or five smaller meals a day will help. Do not overeat. Avoid fried or greasy foods and carbonated drinks. Drink plenty of water and Gatorade to stay hydrated.

Bowel Habits: Narcotics can cause constipation. Use an over the counter mild laxative/stool softener such as Colace or Milk of Magnesia to help. Prune juice may also help. Stay hydrated.

Activity: You should walk around the house at least four times a day. Do not lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk. Do not drive or operate heavy machinery for at least 7 to 10 days after your surgery or until you are pain free, off narcotics, and are not hindered in any way. We will discuss when you can return to work in the office. If you have any paperwork that needs to be completed for your job, please fax it in as soon as possible or bring in with you to the office.

Medication: To avoid using narcotics, take Tylenol and Aleve scheduled for a few days. You can then wean yourself as the pain subsides. You will be given a prescription for a mild narcotic painkiller such as Vicodin or Norco for breakthrough pain. Start with one pill and take it every four to six hours as needed. If that is not enough, you can take two pills at a time. These medications can make you nauseated so take with some crackers or a small meal.

Call the office if: You have a fever of 101.5F or greater. You have nausea and/or vomiting for more than 24 hours.

Please call our office if you have any questions or concerns at 830-484-4606