



NORTHEAST PLASTIC SURGERY
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Breast Reconstruction: Latissimus Dorsi Flap Post-operative Instructions

- Your post-operative appointment is scheduled for _____.
- Empty your drains every 12 hours and record the measured quantities for each drain, separately, on your chart. Please bring the chart with you to your office visits. The amounts that are draining from each drain will determine when the drains may be removed. The drains may take up to 4 weeks before they may be removed. Once the drains are removed, you should keep a dry gauze dressing for 48 hours over the former sites on the skin to prevent drainage onto your clothing.
- Keep your dressings dry. Sponge-bathe only until further instructed. Usually, you may shower 48 hours after the final drain is removed.
- If a tissue expander was placed at the time of your flap surgery, your office-based tissue expansion will usually begin the week following chest drain removal, but no earlier than 2 weeks post-operatively.
- If liquid skin adhesive (glue) was used along your incisions, it may take several weeks to dissolve. Do not apply ointments such as Bacitracin directly over the glued area unless instructed, as this may prematurely dissolve this dressing. If Steri-Strips were placed along your incision, do not peel them off. Once they begin to curl at their edges, you may trim the curled edges with a pair of scissors.
- Because of the risk of damaging the blood supply to your flap, we ask that you avoid wearing a bra for approximately 3 months. Please check with your surgeon prior to beginning to wear any chest garments.
- You have received prescriptions for _____ as an antibiotic and _____ for pain relief. You may alternatively take Tylenol for pain relief. You may stop taking your antibiotic after the final drain has been removed, or unless otherwise directed.
- Avoid aspirin, ibuprofen products (Advil, Motrin), Aleve, Naprosyn, Celebrex, Toradol and products containing Vitamin E for 1 week following your surgery, as they result in a higher risk of bleeding. If you are taking blood thinners such as Coumadin or Lovenox, your regimen will be coordinated with your Coumadin Clinic and medical physicians.
- You may resume your pre-operative diet as tolerated.
- Restrictions are as follows:
 - You may walk as tolerated beginning the day of your surgery.
 - Do not lay flat in bed. Sleep with your head elevated on at least 2 pillows until otherwise directed. Do not lay upon or put any pressure upon the side(s) of your chest where the flap reconstruction was performed.
 - Keep the arm(s) on the reconstructed side(s) elevated on one pillow and about one foot away from the side of your chest to avoid compression on the internal blood supply to the flap while sleeping.
 - No driving for at least 3 weeks. You will be restricted from driving until all narcotic and muscle relaxant medications have been stopped.
 - No raising your arm(s) above shoulder level for 3 weeks. No heavy lifting (> 5 lb) for 6 weeks. Avoid vigorous running, jumping, pushing, and pulling for 8 weeks.
- Please refrain from nicotine-containing products for at least 4 weeks following your surgery. Nicotine reduces circulation and can therefore result in wound healing impairment.
- Starting 2 weeks post-operatively, we normally recommend that you utilize Epi-Derm™ Silicone Gel Strips from Biodermis™. This therapy may be purchased through www.biodermis.com. Silicone sheets should be applied overlying the healing scar for at least 12 hours daily, and ideally closer to 24 hours daily, with gentle cleansing of the scar performed once daily. An individual sheet may be re-used multiple times, with the average lifespan being 7-10 days. Alternatively, you may choose to utilize any number of silicone scar reduction gels (Kelocote®, Mederma®), and massage in a thin coat twice daily to the scar, for 2-3 months.

Please contact us with any additional questions or concerns.