



LIPOSUCTION POSTOPERATIVE CARE INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ ME BEFORE AND AFTER SURGERY

ITEMS TO HAVE BEFORE SURGERY:

<https://www.amazon.com/ideas/amzn1.account.AGXSD5X7BTPBJI7UNCKYYP7VNLKQ>



- * Shower curtain
- * Tight tank top or Kami: If you find that the abdominal binder is making you itchy, you may wear a tight kami shirt under your binder. This is highly recommended. You may begin wearing your Kami 3 days after surgery.
- * Stool softener/laxative (Peri-Colace)—Pain medication can constipate you. Peri-Colace helps soften the feces (“the mush”) and also helps stimulate the bowels (“the push”). These should be started the day after surgery if you are taking pain medication.
- * Extra-Strength Tylenol (500mg): To be used when pain is mild to moderate in place of the narcotic pain medication.
- * Compression stockings
- * Oral Thermometer: It is important to monitor your temperature after surgery in the event that you feel “feverish” or hot. You have a fever if you have a temperature above 101.5.

ITEMS TO ARRANGE BEFORE SURGERY



* Lymphatic Massage: Most patients benefit from lymphatic massage after liposuction as the massage allows for manipulation of surgical swelling to encourage swelling to subside quicker. After your 2 week post op is when you are able to begin massage therapy.

* After surgery, have an adult available to stay with you for the first 72 hours, as you will be weak and drowsy. If you are unable to have an adult stay with you for the first 72 hours, you can arrange for a nurse to care for you at an additional fee

* It is highly recommended that you have a competent adult with you for the duration of your stay if you are an out-of-town patient.

***Travel**- Our practice is located in a rural part of Pennsylvania. Because of this, access to ride sharing such as Uber or Lyft is limited. Please arrange for a rental car if needed.

***Accommodations**- Please visit the website for local hotel recommendations

WALKING:

* It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent postoperative problems. Walking encourages blood flow throughout your legs to reduce the chance of blood clot development.

* It is important to walk slightly "stooped over" (bent at the hips) for 7 – 10 days to release tension on the suture lines. Eventually you will notice you can stand straighter each day. By day 10, you should be able to walk straight up.

* IF YOU HAVE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, LEG SWELLING, AND/OR LEG PAIN AT ANY POINT IN YOUR POSTOPERATIVE HEALING, GO TO AN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATELY (OR CALL 911) AS THIS COULD SIGNIFY A BLOOD CLOT.

COMPRESSION STOCKINGS/TRAVELING

* If you are an out-of-town patient and will be traveling back home after your surgery, please wear compression stockings on the plane or in the car and remove them after landing.

* When on the airplane or car, please be sure to get up every hour to walk around and encourage blood-flow in your legs. Also, be sure to wiggle your ankles when sitting as if pressing a gas pedal to promote blood flow.

* It is safe to fly 2 weeks after surgery if you have been cleared to do so.



* If you experience shortness of breath after a flight or leg pain with extreme leg swelling, please visit an Emergency Department immediately to rule out a blood clot.

PAIN AND PAIN MEDICATION:

* Ice operative areas (20 minutes every hour)- not directly on the skin, ice over binder or bra

*Take pain medication with food.

* Percocet (Oxycodon + Acetaminophen) or Vicodin (Hydrocodone + Acetaminophen) should be taken as directed:

1 tablet every 4 – 6 hours as needed

* If your pain is mild, or if you do not like the effects of the narcotics, you can take Tylenol® (Acetaminophen) 1000mg every 8 hours (which would be 2 tablets of the Extra Strength Tylenol®, purchased over the counter). Please do not exceed 3000mg in a 24-hour period. Please do not mix the Tylenol® with the narcotic pain medication since the narcotic pain medication consists of 325mg of Tylenol®

* If you require additional pain medication, please contact our office at 814-849-6591.

* If you are to finish your pain medication during a weekend or after hours, you will need to wait until regular business hours to visit our office to collect your prescription since we are not open on weekends or after hours.

* If you are under the care of a pain management provider or already take narcotic pain medication or an anti-anxiety medication, our office **WILL NOT** be providing you with an initial RX or refill for the aforementioned. It is your responsibility to obtain the necessary medications/refills from your prescribing provider. Please make sure to bring the necessary medications if you are visiting us from out-of-town as we will not be providing it.

* Our office will not be providing any additional medications that are unrelated to the surgical site (i.e., blood pressure meds, muscle relaxers, sleeping pills, etc.). Should you require these in the postoperative period, you will be responsible for acquiring them from your primary care provider.

* Take a stool softener with pain medication to prevent constipation.



* **DO NOT DRIVE WHILE TAKING PAIN MEDICATION.** These medications can result in drowsiness. If you are pulled-over while driving under the influence of narcotics or scheduled substances, you will get a DUI!

* **DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL WHILE TAKING PAIN MEDICATION.** This can be a deadly combination.

* Only take the narcotic pain medication if needed. The quicker you can wean off of the pain medication, the better you will feel and heal.

DO NOT SMOKE. This is very important!!!

* Smoking (tobacco, marijuana, or vapes) can result in a lack of blood supply to tissues and fat causing tissue death or delayed wound healing. Even 0% nicotine vapes contain a trace amount of nicotine that the FDA accepts as 0%.

* Do not allow those caring for you to smoke around you as second-hand smoke can be detrimental to your recovery.

* Smoking can resume 4 weeks after surgery as long as no challenges in healing are present.

SUPPLEMENTS:

* Do not take aspirin (or products containing aspirin), anti-inflammatories, or Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Midol®) for 3 weeks after surgery. Also do not begin herbal supplements until 3 weeks after surgery.

* Phentermine or appetite suppressants should not be taken until 6 weeks after surgery as these supplements increase heart rate and blood pressure and can interfere with your recovery.

REMEMBER THE FIVE W'S:

* The most common cause of an elevated temperature/fever after surgery is due to collapse of the lungs (atelectasis). This is a normal occurrence as a result of anesthesia and the physical stress your body is undergoing. In order to decrease your body temperature and expand the lungs, it is important to do the following:

* **Wind:** Take 10 deep breaths per hour for the first 72 hours.

* **Water:** Dehydration can also cause an increase in body temperature. It is important that you remain hydrated since surgery can deplete your body of water. 64 ounces of water a day is encouraged.



- * Walk: Get up and walk once every hour to keep your blood moving. This is key for preventing a blood clot.
- * Wonder drugs: Take your pain medication or Tylenol® as needed. An increase in pain can cause an increase in body temperature. 4
- * Wound: Observe the wound for redness, heat, discharge (pus), and openings.

SLEEPING POSITION:

- * If you have had liposuction to your calves, ankles, thighs, or arms, you will notice that your feet and/or hands will become quite swollen the first few weeks following surgery. To aid with the swelling, it is highly encouraged that you attempt to elevate your legs and/or arms whenever sitting or lying in bed.
- * **For leg liposuction:** If sitting on a sofa or bed, you can rest your legs on an ottoman or chair directly in front of you.
- * If on a bed, rest your legs against the backboard or place pillows below your legs and knees to slightly 4 elevate your legs.
- * **For arm liposuction:** When sitting or lying down, place pillows under each arm in order to elevate your arms

SHOWERING:

- * You may shower or sponge bath 3 days after surgery. Please use the provided lanyard while in the shower to hold your drains in place.
- * If you find that the binder is making you itchy, you may wear a tight kami shirt under your binder.
- * Make sure someone is with you at your first shower. Make the shower a quick one with your back to the shower head.

DIET:

- * A light diet is best after surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or Jell-O. You may start a regular diet the next day.
- * Though it is impossible to get rid of gas entirely, there are strategies to reduce it. Eat and drink slowly, chew thoroughly and cut down on carbonated drinks. Avoid sugar-free gums and sugar-free candies that contain sorbitol or xylitol – both sweeteners are poorly digested and can result in bloating.



* Stay on a soft diet, high in protein, for 2 – 3 days and avoid spicy food which can cause nausea and gas. Then you may resume a normal, high protein diet.

SUTURES:

- * If you only have liposuction you will have sutures that need removed at your post op appointment.
- * If you are an out-of-town patient, please plan to stay until your 2-week visit, return to our office at your 2-week visit.
- * Do not apply anything on your incisions for 3 weeks unless asked to do so. Keep the incisions clean and dry.
- * 3 – 4 weeks after your surgery (or when all of your scabs have fallen off and there are no breaks in the skin), you can begin scar treatment.

SCAR THERAPY:

- * You may begin using silicone scar sheets as soon as the skin is fully closed, after all sutures are removed and after all scabs have fallen off. This usually occurs anywhere between 3 – 6 weeks from surgery.
- * All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact or tanning booths are to be avoided for 9 months. Use a water-resistant sunscreen with SPF of 50+ with UVA and UVB protection for at least 9 months. Sun damage to the scars may result in permanent hyperpigmentation or hypopigmentation to your scars.
- * Please note that use of medical grade silicone sheeting or silicone cream on surgical scars will temporarily result in red/purple pigment on the scars. This takes place as blood rushes to the surgical incision to create collagen for wound healing and scar maturation. It can take 9 months on average for the discoloration to begin to fade.

COMPRESSION BINDER/GARMENT:

- * Wear the surgical binder or compression garment that we have provided for a total of 6 weeks following surgery.
- * Often times patients like to wear a muscle shirt or cami under the white compression binder provided to prevent rashes or itchy skin.
- * The garment is to be worn 24/7 for the first 4 weeks following surgery.



* After 4 weeks, the garment is to be worn during the day, and off at night to sleep for an additional 2 weeks.

* You can also purchase garments at any medical supply store, Amazon.com, or department store. On Amazon.com, search for "Postoperative Abdominal Compression Garment."

EXERCISE AND SEXUAL ACTIVITY:

* No overheating for the first 3 weeks (spas, exercising in the sun, etc).

* At 4 weeks, you can consider passive or less vigorous sexual activity that will not cause abdominal movement.

* Cardio may resume at 4 weeks following surgery.

* Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs. for the first 6 weeks.

* You may begin swimming 3 weeks post-operatively if healing is complete.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

* Abdominal bloating is to be expected in the early postoperative period. Bloating results from sodium present in your medications and in the anesthesia.

* Most patients report difficulty sleeping and difficulty with pain management the first night after surgery. This is usually secondary to the effects of anesthesia and should subside within 24-28 hours.

* Bruising is a normal expectation following surgery. Bruising could be apparent for as long as 3 – 4 weeks afterwards. The bruises will move down your body as they are absorbed.

* The body retains fluids in response to surgery so do not expect to see any immediate weight loss for the first 2-3 weeks. In the long run you will see more of a change in the way your clothes fit than a decrease in pounds.

* Massage to the surgical sites will help increase circulation and alleviate the hardness felt underneath the skin. Massage can begin 4 days after surgery.

* A lymphatic massage therapist might be a good idea. - Prices vary based on treatment location and duration of massage therapy. Suggested therapy is 2 – 3 times per week for 3 – 4 weeks. This allows for enhanced lymph drainage and for enhanced resolution of the swelling associated with liposuction.

* It is normal to have an itching sensation and/or numbness following surgery in the areas that underwent liposuction. This will gradually subside over the next 2-3 months. .



* It takes 6 MONTHS FOR FINAL RESULTS to appear. In the interim, you may notice: - Incision asymmetry - Swelling that changes from day-to-day - Redness to incisions that may take 9 months to fade -Be patient please and try not to focus on these issues before the 6-month period.

* A burning sensation (raw, sensitive) or sharp shooting pains along the abdomen and incision line is normal and indicative of nerve regeneration. These "neuralgias" will burn out by 9 months.

* Numbness is expected to resolve by 9-24 months on average.

COMMON COMPLICATIONS:

INFECTION: *Infections are most likely to take place between day 10-14 from surgery.

* Symptoms and signs of infection include: - Redness, warmth, fever, tenderness, pus, malaise

* Most infections, if detected early, can be treated with proper antibiotic therapy. If infections are severe or not responding to antibiotic therapy, then prompt visit to an ER for IV antibiotic therapy or wound exploration may be necessary.

* If you are an out-of-town patient and you develop an infection, you will need to visit with your local provider or local ER for evaluation and care. If fever and pus accompany redness, please visit with your local ER to rule out and manage a possible abscess via CT scan. It is not recommended that you travel long distances with an infection

EMOTIONAL EXEPECTATIONS FOLLOWING SURGERY:

* It is not unusual for patients to undergo significant emotional "ups and downs" after any type of surgery. Factors such as underlying stress, medications, and/or psychological tendencies can result in patients experiencing a "postoperative depression" that generally resolves after a few weeks. Having a partner, family member, or friend who is supportive can help with this process. Understanding the stages of emotional "ups and downs" can help patients stay calm and recover from this emotional process faster:

Phase 1: Being Out of It: Swelling and discomfort is most severe over the first few days after surgery. Pain medications also can make you disoriented and emotional.

Phase 2: Mood Swings - Having just had surgery, patients are adjusting to a sudden change in their appearance with much anticipation. The presence of bruising, swelling, and asymmetries will distort a patient's results thereby concealing the final outcome. Mood swings (especially sadness), worry and depression are common emotions as a result. Patients may even ask, "What have I done?" or think that "I never should have done it."



Phase 3: Being over critical - During the second week, patients will probably be feeling a lot better. The swelling and muscle cramping/spasms will be decreasing and sutures will be out. Because of anticipation, it is natural for patients to look critically at their new body worrying about symmetry, scars, and so on. At this point, it's normal to wonder if they have achieved their goal and what they paid for. This is too soon to tell and most concerns are resolved with time.

Phase 4: Happy at last - Finally, about 3 – 6 months out of surgery, patients will probably start liking how they look and are feeling much better. They may be in the mood to check out some bathing suits or outfits to show off their new figure.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS:

- * It is important to be seen by our office for your post-op appointments
- * The first two appointments are highly recommended. It is strongly advised that you stay locally for the first 2 weeks following surgery if you are an out-of-town patient.
- * It's important to keep in mind that these appointments are patient-specific and may vary depending on your own individual healing and/or complications.
- Our practice can evaluate you via facetime, google duo or zoom from a distance. If you have a cosmetic or functional complication, please plan to visit our office for a postoperative visit. We can provide referrals and do our best to manage any complications from a distance.
- * Call to schedule your appointments at (814) 849-6591 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday – Friday. The office is closed on Saturday and Sunday.
- * **The office is closed on Saturday and Sunday. Should you experience a complication over the weekend, you will need to be seen by an urgent care and/or Emergency Room.**