

Discharge Instructions: Breast Care – Dr. Crooks

These instructions explain what you or your care partner needs to do to continue your care at home. Please read and follow these instructions carefully.

Wound Care

- Your doctor has placed sutures (stitches) to keep the incision closed so it can heal properly.
- You may have sutures that need to be removed in 1-3 weeks, or your sutures may be all under your skin with Steri-strips (little white paper tapes) over the incision. Sutures under the skin will dissolve on their own.
- Regardless of the type of sutures you have, care of your incision is the same. **Leave the original surgical gauze in place for 48 hours**, and then gently remove it.
- If your bandage becomes loose before 48 hours, reinforce it with surgical tape.

After 48 hours (when the gauze is off)

- If you have steri-strips, leave them in place until they begin to fall off on their own; then you can gently wash them off. Do NOT pull on them before then because you could put stress on your incision.
- You may shower. Gently wash the incision with soap and water, pat the area dry, and leave it open to the air. Keep it clean and dry between washings. You do not need a new bandage and you do not need to use antibiotic ointment, alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide.
- If your sutures get caught on your clothes, or if you have slight drainage, cover the incision with a small piece of gauze and tape it in place. Use the least amount of tape possible; the tape may irritate your skin.
- For the first few days after surgery, a small amount of drainage from the incision is not unusual. It usually goes away on its own. If you notice bleeding from the incision, apply firm, direct pressure for 10 minutes. If the bleeding continues, reapply firm, direct pressure for another 10 minutes. If you are still bleeding after 20 minutes, call us at one of the numbers below or go to the nearest hospital emergency department.
 - Breast Care: **716-332-6834**
 - Southtowns: **716-656-4450**

Restrictions

- Do not put the incision under water for a long time. **Do not swim, take a bath or sit in a hot tub for 2 weeks.**
- Do not do any vigorous activities/exercise that may put stress on the incision for 2 weeks.
- Do not take aspirin, ibuprofen, or any other medications that may cause bleeding problems, unless your doctor gives you permission to do so.
- Avoid perfume or scented lotion near the incision; it may cause irritation.
- Do not lift anything that weighs more than 10 pounds for 2 weeks.
- If you take blood thinners such as Plavix[®], Coumadin[®] (warfarin), Pradaxa[®], Eliquis[®], or Xarelto[®], your doctor will tell you when to restart your medication.
- Do not take any herbal medications for 2 weeks.
- Walking is encouraged.
- Do not drive if you are taking prescription narcotic pain medications.
- Stay on a liquid diet the day of surgery (soups, water, Jell-o[™], fruit juices, Ensure[®], Boost[®], etc.) and then advance to a regular diet as long as your stomach is not upset.

Pain Control

- For pain after your procedure, you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol[®]), if needed. If you need a prescription for pain medication, your doctor will prescribe it for you.
- You should expect some discomfort/pain when you do range of motion exercises.

Follow Up Care

- If your sutures need to be removed, this is usually done 1-3 weeks after surgery. Even if your sutures will dissolve, the doctor likes to examine the incision while it is healing.
- You should have been scheduled for a follow up appointment in the office. You can find this appointment on the paperwork that was mailed to you. Since this appointment is very important, please contact the office if you do not have one scheduled or if you need to change the date and/or time.