

# Discharge Instructions: Simple Mastectomy with Tissue Expander Reconstruction, with or without Lymph Node Procedure - Breast

## What To Expect

- You will have Dermabond® (skin glue) covering your incision. This creates a protective barrier over the wound.
- A small amount of bruising is normal after surgery.
- You will have 1 or 2 Jackson-Pratt (JP) drains after your mastectomy.
- If blue dye was used during the sentinel lymph node biopsy, your skin, urine, and parts of your eyes may be blue for the first 24 - 48 hours after surgery.

## Wound Care

- You may shower 24-48 hours after surgery.
- You should keep a clean, dry dressing over the JP drain insertion site. Optional: You may cover the mastectomy incision with a dry dressing.
- The drains are sutured into place and covered with a sterile dressing. Do not remove the dressing over the drain for the first 24-48 hours unless it gets heavily saturated or soiled.
- Write down how much comes out of your drain every day. Bring this record with you to your post-operative visit.
- The amount of drainage will slowly decrease over time.
- The color of the drainage should change from a reddish color to a straw colored fluid – this is normal.
- When showering, do not try to scrub the incisions or drainage sites. Do not soak the incision (baths/swimming/hot tubs) for 2 weeks. Allow soap and water to come in contact with your incision and then gently pat dry with a clean towel.
- The Dermabond® will start to come off after about 2 weeks. Do not try to pick off loose edges.
- Avoid bras that rub or put direct pressure on the incision sites. You will be more comfortable if you wear a sports bra or supportive bra after your procedure.

## Restrictions

- It is helpful to walk regularly after surgery.
- Avoid lifting anything weighing 10 pounds or more. Avoid excessive use of the affected arm (such as weight lifting) until the drain is removed.
- Do not raise the arm above shoulder level (more than 90 degrees) until the surgical drains are removed.
- Once the drain is removed, begin the range of motion exercises the physical therapist taught you. Progressive use of the affected arm is acceptable and has not been shown to worsen arm swelling.
- Most home medications can be restarted the day after surgery (24 hours after surgery). We will give you specific instructions about blood thinners, including aspirin, on the medication reconciliation form.
- Do not drive or make important decisions while on opioid pain medications.

## Diet

- You may resume your previous diet. We recommend you begin with lighter foods and if that does not upset your stomach, progress to a regular diet.

## Pain Control

- For severe pain: We will electronically send a prescription for an opioid pain medication such as Norco 7.5/325 milligrams (mg) **or** acetaminophen (Tylenol®) with codeine to the pharmacy you provided at registration. Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed. Both of these medications contain acetaminophen. **Do not take additional acetaminophen if you are taking these medications.**
  - Opioid medications can make you constipated. To help prevent constipation, drink 2-3 quarts of fluid every day. You can also take stool softeners.
  - Take pain medication with food to decrease nausea.
  - If you still need opioid medications after your prescription has ended, please call the breast clinic. This may be a sign of prolonged healing, infection, or other complication.
- For less severe pain: You may take an over the counter medication such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or an NSAID such as ibuprofen/Advil®. Follow the directions on the package.
- We will also give you a prescription for a muscle relaxer called cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril®), which will make you drowsy. Take 5-10 mg every 8-12 hours. This may be in addition to other pain medications.
- While the drain is in place, you will be given a prescription for antibiotics. This should be taken on a full stomach. If the drain is in place longer than 1 week, your plastic surgeon will give you an additional prescription. If you develop diarrhea (loose stools more than 3-4 times/day), notify your plastic surgeon.

## Call Us If...

- you develop a fever higher than 101° F (38.3°C) or have a fever with chills
- an incision becomes red, inflamed, warm, or tender to the touch
- the drainage from the bulb increases in volume, turns dark red with clots, or stops draining completely
- you notice pus-filled, foul-smelling drainage from either the incision or the drain
- you notice that your chest wall is becoming "puffy" or filled with fluid after surgery
- you have severe pain that is not relieved with pain medication

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our clinic at **716-845-3152**. The Breast Center is open 8:00am and 5:00pm on weekdays, but your call will be answered even if the Breast Center is closed.

## Follow Up Care

- You should be scheduled for a follow up appointment in the clinic about 1- 2 weeks after surgery.
- At this visit, we will remove the drain if your drainage is less than 20-25 ml/24 hours. This requires removal of a single stitch and is generally well tolerated.
- At this visit, we will discuss the final pathology report and discuss any further recommendations.
- Since this appointment is very important, please contact the clinic if you do not have one scheduled or if you need to change the date or time.