

THE FIRST GLANCE

BRACHIOPLASTY POST CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Supplies to have at home:

- Your prescription medications
- **Gravol** (oral medication and suppositories)
- **Stool softener (ie: Restorolax/Senokot)**. Used to prevent constipation- **start if no BM for 2 days
- **Reactine** (anti-histamine to help with itchiness associated with medications or wound healing)
- **Flexible gauze wrap** (Johnson & Johnson 3" or 4" Kling®)
- **Hypoallergenic Paper Medical Tape** (3M or similar)
- **Medical grade compression garment** (you will be fitted for a garment, to be worn once drains are removed)
- You may bring a drink (ie: ginger ale, juice box, Gatorade) and small snack (crackers) with you on your surgery day to have in recovery room with you

Medications:

- Take all medications as prescribed, ensure you finish your entire course of antibiotics even if you do not experience any signs of infection.
- Follow all instructions which may accompany the medications such as: taking with food, avoiding alcohol and driving restrictions.
- Take your pain medication as directed when you get home. You may find these do not eliminate your discomfort 100%, but you will feel more comfortable. Pain is expected, the goal is to make the pain tolerable.

After surgery:

The day after surgery you will be encouraged to get out of bed for short walks to promote blood circulation. It is best for you to not sit or be in any single position for long periods of time during the first several days.

Straining, bending and lifting should be avoided a few weeks after surgery. It is very important that you stay hydrated after your surgery, **the evening of your surgery please drink Gatorade, Powerade, or other similar electrolyte replacement beverage**. After the first evening, staying hydrated with water is recommended.

You may sleep in any position you find comfortable. Your body will tell you if it's not a good position (ie- if you feel excessive pulling or discomfort then you must listen to your body and find a more comfortable position).

Swelling and bruising can be expected. Any bruising will disappear over a period of weeks, the swelling may take months to subside to see the final result of your brachioplasty. You may also notice some numbness over portions of your arms and axillae area, this is normal and may persist for several months. If you have surgical drains they will be removed within the first few days after surgery.

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Wound care:

You may have your first shower after **48 hours**. At this time you may remove the thick dressings only. It may be helpful to leave the dressings on and let them get wet in the shower to aid in removal. Frequently a dissolvable skin adhesive is used to help protect your incision, you may notice a purple or blue colour to the incision as a result and this will slough off in 1-2 weeks with normal showering.

The incision may appear uneven and / or bumpy, this is **normal** and will smooth and soften as you heal. You may shower as you normally would, carefully rinsing the incision off with clean water at the end of the shower and patting dry with a clean towel.

Flexible gauze wrap will need to be used as a dressing to once the original dressings have been removed. You will need to keep the incisions covered for approximately 2 weeks after surgery, changing the dressings daily. Do not apply any creams, lotions or other ointments such as scar creams to incisions for at least 4 weeks.

Incisions will be pink or red in color. They will remain this way for many months after surgery and may even worsen before they get better. The incisions will fade over time. It is important to realize the incision lines will always be visible, eventually they will be faint lines but everyone is different to how noticeable their scars will be.

Drain Care

- Empty drains as instructed and document drainage. Drains are removed once drainage is **less than 30cc over 24 hours unless told otherwise**.
- If you are from out-of-town (**4+ hours away**) your drains will be removed once drainage is **less than 30cc over a 48 hour period**, this is to further reduce the incidence of seroma requiring drainage.

Anticipate your drains being in for approximately 10 days, but no longer than 14 days.

- Apply Polysporin at drain site and cover with gauze to absorb fluid that may leak out. This is normal and can occur for 1 week after drain have been removed
- Drain sites will close in 7 to 10 days.
- If there is a gush of fluid that occurs, this is likely fluid that was not picked up by the drain, this is normal. Get into the shower and gently push on your abdomen or breast to encourage the fluid to drain out.
- If drainage persists or is predominantly fresh blood contact Dr. Islur.

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Garment:

You will be required to wear a medical grade compression garment. You will need to wear this garment **24 hours/day for 2 weeks, then 12 hours/day for 2 more weeks**. You may wear it more often if you like, 4 weeks is the minimum. The garment is important to prevent/reduce complications and help you take your shape sooner. Your physician may give further instructions at your first follow up appointment.

Numbness and/or tingling to your arms and hands can be normal for the **first 24 hours**. If you experience numbness and/or tingling **beyond 24 hours**, remove your garment and call your surgeon.

If your hands become swollen at any point, remove your garment, and contact the clinic to speak with a nurse or call your surgeon.

Activity/Exercise:

Depending on which technique was used, the extent of your brachioplasty, and your physical condition, you may be able to return to non-strenuous work anywhere from 1-3 weeks after surgery. You can return to normal activities including some form of mild activity after approximately 3 weeks. You may walk as much as you feel comfortable providing you are walking at a gentle pace.

It is important that you work towards the goal of raising your arms fully above your head, this may take several days or up to 2 weeks for you to do. A good exercise to perform to improve your mobility is stand arms-length in front of a wall and slowly “walk” your fingers up.

You may experience some mild, periodic discomfort and swelling during this time, this is normal. Severe pain should be reported to your surgeon. Any sexual activity should be avoided for a minimum of 3 weeks, and you may be advised to wait longer.

*Do not sleep with pets in the bed to avoid infection

*No baths, hot tubs, swimming pools, and lake water for 4 weeks or until your incisions are fully healed in order to avoid infection

*Avoid exposure to second-hand smoke for at least the first few weeks after surgery

In order to ensure you receive the best possible care, we want you to observe for signs and symptoms of possible infection. Please contact the clinic immediately and request to speak with a nurse if you experience any of the following after surgery. If it is outside of clinic hours please contact the clinic the following business day:

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Please contact the clinic **immediately** and request to speak to a nurse or physician if you experience any of the following after surgery.

Increased pain, increased redness, creamy or pus-like discharge, foul odour, or
Increased warmth around surgical site, rash, fever exceeding 38.8° C (101.8°F)
Chest pain (for continuous chest pain lasting more than 5 minutes – call 911)
Unexplained sudden onset of shortness of breath
Rapid pulse or heart palpitations
Severe pain in leg that does not resolve and/or swelling of leg
Changes in skin colour of an extremity, such as turning pale, red or blue
Dizziness that does not resolve, or fainting
Coughing up blood / Bloody diarrhea

After Hour Care

If there is a concern about your surgery or your healing, please call The First Glance Clinic at **204-885-1419**.

If the clinic is closed (evenings or weekends) or in case of an emergency please call Dr. Islur 431-302-5177

If after 3 attempts you cannot reach Dr Islur, please call the plastic surgery resident by calling St Boniface Hospital Operator at 204-237-2053

Visit www.drislur.ca for more information

Please consider bringing your old bras to The First Glance on your surgery day. Gently used bras will be donated to local women's shelters throughout the city. Thank-you.