



Abdominoplasty Instructions

Please take the time to review these instructions prior to your operation. It is important for your caregiver to be familiar with them as well. Please ask any questions you may have.

Before Your Surgery:

1. Please fill the medication prescribed to you prior to the day of your operation. Bring all medication with you on surgery day.
2. If your commute is greater than one hour, please plan in advance to stay the night in Lexington.
3. Arrange for a friend or family member who is over the age of 18 to stay with you for *at least* 24 hours following your procedure.
4. Arrange to take at least three to four full weeks off of work. Please keep in mind that time off work varies per individual.
5. Do not make any out of state travel plans for 6 weeks following your procedure.
6. It is very important to arrange care for the first two to three weeks following your procedure. You will be on bed rest, except to use the rest room. If you have young children or pets, please take the time and effort to arrange for someone to care for you and your children and/or pets. While on bed rest, cooking, cleaning, errands and other “chores” are prohibited.
7. Nicotine use is prohibited 6 weeks prior and 6 weeks following your procedure. This includes the oral tobacco, vapes, e-cigarettes.

Night Before/Day of Surgery:

1. Place the Trans-Scop (scopolamine) patch behind your right ear the night before surgery. Do not touch your eyes and wash your hands after placement. If this medication gets in your eye, it can cause your eye to dilate, causing temporary blurred vision. This medication will help prevent nausea related to anesthesia.

2. Take your prescribed antibiotic the night before and the morning of surgery.
3. Please have nothing to eat or drink after midnight the night before your surgery. It is okay to have a small sip of water with your medication.
4. Wash with the Hibiclens soap provided the night before and the morning of surgery. Avoid your perineal area and face.
5. Do not wear any jewelry, including rings and body piercings.
6. No fingernail polish, including gel, acrylic or SNS nails.
7. Please do not apply lotion, deodorant, make up, contact lenses, hair spray or hair gel.
8. Wear comfortable clothes that are easy to change into such as loose fitting shorts or sweat pants and a button down or zip up top. Avoid tight clothing such as leggings.
9. Bring your medication with you on the day of surgery.

Medications For Your Surgery:

Medication typically prescribed:

- ☐ Cyclobenzaprine 10 mg (Flexeril) - muscle relaxer
- ☐ Promethazine 25 mg (Phenergan) - nausea
- ☐ Oxycodone/acetaminophen 5/325 mg (Percocet) - pain
- ☐ Cephalexin 500 mg (Keflex) - antibiotic
- ☐ Scopolamine patch (Trans-Scop) - nausea patch

Home medications:

- ☐ Continue taking:
 - ☐ Stop taking __ weeks prior:
1. Please avoid taking aspirin, vitamin E, red wine and NSAIDS (ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil) two weeks prior and two weeks after your operation. These medications inhibit your body's ability to stop bleeding easily. Tylenol is safe for you to take for pain instead.

2. Instead of using your prescribed pain medication, it is okay to take Tylenol instead. Please keep in mind that the maximum amount of Tylenol that is safe to take in a 24 hour period is less than 4 grams (4,000 mg).
3. If you get constipated at a baseline, or get constipated while taking narcotics, begin taking a stool softener such as Colace, prior to your operation. Plan to take Colace with each dose of narcotic pain medication.
4. You may purchase Arnica tablets or gel to use for post-operative swelling and bruising. It is beneficial to begin taking the tablets two weeks prior to your operation.

After Your Surgery:

1. Your incisions are closed with absorbable suture. Please do not trim or remove any sutures. Any suture removal will be handled at office visits by the appropriate staff.
2. You will wake up with an abdominal binder on. You are to wear this compression garment for 4-6 weeks, depending on your swelling and how you heal. You may take the binder off only to shower.
3. You may have a moderate amount of red drainage the first few days. This is normal and expected. However, protect your car seats and furniture with old towels and sheets. We recommend placing puppy pads or other absorbent pads on surfaces that you will be resting on.
4. You will also have two bulb drains, one on each side of your abdomen. You will record the time, date and amount emptied each time you empty the drains. Once the drain output is less than 30 cc/24 hours, it can be removed. Drains are typically removed at 3-5 days and 7-10 days. At each follow up appointment, you will bring your drain logs, until removed.
5. You will not be allowed to drive until cleared by Dr. Gerstle. This occurs usually at 3-4 weeks. You will need to arrange a caregiver to bring you to follow up appointments.
6. During your first shower, please have a family member or friend close by. You may secure the drains with safety pens, on an inexpensive necklace or lanyard. Showers are to be cool to warm. Please do not take hot showers, as that will increase swelling and chances of light headedness. No bathing or submerging in water until cleared by Dr. Gerstle.
7. Sleep on your back, with the head of bed elevated for the first two weeks. You may place a pillow underneath your knees to help you be more comfortable.
8. You will remain slightly flexed at the waist at all times for the first two weeks.

9. You are on bed rest for the first 2-3 weeks. You may get up to go to the rest room. You may take a slow, light walk around the house every 2 hours to increase circulation.
10. While on pain medication, exercise caution with tasks such as climbing stairs.
11. Post-anesthetic nausea is a very common complaint. It generally subsides in about 24-48 hours. Take medication with light, bland food such as toast or crackers.
12. While preparing for surgery and during your healing, it is important to maintain a healthy diet full of fruit, vegetables and lean meats. Processed or fast foods are not advised and will increase swelling and the amount of time drains remain in place. Please drink plenty of fluids.
13. At one month, light exercise such as walking can begin. It will be 6-8 weeks before heavy exercise such as weight lifting and intense cardio can be reimplemented.
14. Bruising, swelling and blood tinged drainage is expected following a tummy tuck. Drainage usually subsides in 24-48 hours. However, bruising and swelling can be present for weeks after. Numbness and tingling and the feeling of abdominal tightness can also be present, but will subside as you heal over the course of weeks to months.
15. Avoid all sun exposure on your scars. Use sunscreen with SPF of at least 50 to prevent darkening or hyperpigmentation.
16. Beginning at week 4, we recommend the use of Biocorneum twice a day. The use of this silicone scar gel will soften your scars and help fade redness.
17. It is normal to feel hardness at your incision site for the months following your procedure. It will soften with time and your scar will fade. The final result of your surgery will be judged at 6-12 months.

Follow-up Appointments

1. We will see you for a postoperative appointment the day after your surgery.
2. You will have weekly appointments as you heal for 4-6 weeks.
3. Subsequent appointments are made at the discretion of Dr. Gerstle, up until 6 months.