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LIPOSUCTION AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

THINGS TO PURCHASE by day #3:

1. ABD pads or large maxi pads → These will help to absorb any fluid that may be seeping from the incisions (which is normal)
2. Non-stick pads for incisions if necessary → These will help to protect incisions from rubbing on clothing.
3. Compression garments: See photos below for examples of garments. You should purchase two of each either online, at any medical supply store, or any department store.
4. Stool softener (Ducolax, Miralax, or Metamucil)—Pain medication can constipate you.



GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- After surgery, please have someone available to stay with you for the first 24 – 48 hours, as you will be weak and drowsy.
- It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent postoperative problems. It is good to walk for 15 – 20 minutes 6 times per day.
- Take pain medication with food. You will be given an anti-anxiety/muscle relaxant medication (Valium) that you may take as well to prevent aggravation of the pain cycle. When taking Valium, take it 1 – 2 hours after the pain medication.
- **Take a stool softener with pain medication** to prevent constipation (like Ducolax which is sold over-the-counter)
- **DO NOT SMOKE.** This is very important!!!
 - Smoking 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%. Smoking can resume 6 weeks after surgery as long as no challenges in healing are present.
- Do not drive while taking pain medication.
- Do not take aspirin (or products containing aspirin) or Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, Midol) for 3 weeks after surgery. Also do not begin herbal supplements until 3 weeks after surgery.
- If compression stockings were provided, please leave the compression stockings on for 5 days after surgery. They may be removed when showering but must be replaced after. You can also purchase additional compression socks at Target if needed.
- Remember the Five W's:
 - **Wind:** Take 10 deep breaths per hour. The most common cause of fever / elevated temperature after surgery is due to collapse of the lungs (atelectasis). In order to decrease your body temperature and expand the lungs, it is important to do this exercise.
 - **Water:** Dehydration can also cause an increase in body temperature. It is important that you remain hydrate since abdominoplasty and liposuction deplete your body of water.
 - **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 as needed. If 1 tablet is not sufficient, then take 2 tablets every 4 or 6 hours (of Percocet, Vicodin, Norco).
 - **Wound:** Observe the wound for redness, heat, discharge (pus), and openings.
- It's recommended that you purchase maxi pads or ABD pads (absorbent pads) in case you are leaking from your incision sites which may happen (and is very normal).

Showering:

- You may shower (but not bathe) in 3 days. Remove all your garments and dressings (except for the yellow sticky gauze) when showering. When out of the shower, blow dry incisions on a cool setting and apply new dressings and usual garments.

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 zylitol – both sweeteners are poorly digested.
- 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:

- Sutures will be removed in 7 days.
- 3 weeks after all sutures have been removed, you can begin scar treatment:
 - All incisions will be sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact or tanning booths are to be avoided and use a sunscreen with SPF of 15 with UVA and UVB protection for at least 6 months.
 - Incision scars can be massaged with the scar therapy cream (like Biocorneum sold here) starting at week 3. This will promote early softening and maturation of these areas. You can also use silicone sheeting (i.e., Embrace Scar Away) which can be placed over incision sites to promote healing.

Binder and Compression Garments:

- Wear a binder (compression garment) AT ALL TIMES for at least 2 WEEKS day and night 24/7. You may remove the garment beginning on the 3rd day before taking your first shower, however be sure someone is with you to help, as occasionally you can feel dizzy or light headed. This is normal. Sit or lay down for about 20 minutes BEFORE you shower.
- You then wear the compression garment at night for the second two weeks. Many patients continue to wear the garment for comfort. You can put the compression garment in the washer and air dry. If you wish, you may purchase a full length Lycra girdle without zippers at a department store to wear for comfort.
 - If abdominal, flank or thigh lipo, you can wear SPANX or similar **compression garment**
 - If entire leg or arm, you can purchase a compression garment online by typing “abdominal compression garment”, “leg compression garment” or “arm compression garment” on Google or at any medical supply store.



Exercise:

- No overheating for the first three weeks (no hot baths, showers, spas, exercising in the sun, etc). For the first 10 days following surgery, raising your blood pressure (heart rate) will cause bleeding. This includes sexual intercourse and sexual activity.
- Abdominal stress on your muscles will stretch or break the sutures if you exercise before 4 weeks. At 4 weeks, you should consider passive or less vigorous sexual activity that will not cause abdominal movement.
- Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs for the first 6 weeks.
- Abdominal muscle exercises are discouraged for 3 months after surgery to protect the abdominal wall plication suture.
- You may begin swimming 4 weeks post-operatively, if healing is complete.

WHAT TO EXPECT:

- 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.
- Swelling and bruising are a normal expectation following surgery. Bruising could be apparent for as long as 3-4 months afterwards. The bruises will move down your body as they are absorbed.
- Massage to the surgical sites will help increase circulation and alleviate the hardness felt underneath the skin. Massage can begin 2 weeks after surgery.
 - A lymphatic massage therapist might be a good idea.
 - Lymphatic massage therapy following liposuction surgery beginning 3- 4 weeks after the procedure. 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.
 - You can also use a heated percussion massager (look it up on Google) to massage the area in a circular motion for five minutes per day starting at 2 weeks.
- 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 **3 – 6 months for final results** to come in. In the interim, you may notice asymmetry and swelling. Be patient.
- A burning sensation along the abdomen is normal and indicative of nerve regeneration.

Follow up appointments

- It is important to be seen by Jackie (PA-C) after your initial post-op checks.
- Jackie (PA-C) will see you in follow-up appointments:
 - 1 week, 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and 1 year post-op.
- If you are from out-of-town and cannot see Jackie at the recommended frequency, then it is strongly advised that you establish a relationship with a provider in your hometown who can follow your progress or evaluate you in case of infection, wound separation, or seroma. Jackie and Dr. Dubrow cannot evaluate you or treat you over the phone.
- Call to schedule your appointments at (949) 515-4111 between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM to schedule an appointment.

Please call the office at (949) 515-4111 or Jackie (PA-C) at her cell phone at (818) 681-5882 if:

- Redness, increased pain at surgical incision sites, sudden increase in swelling, warmth, drainage (pus), or oral temperature greater than 101°
- Nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medication
- Please call between the hours of 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM. If you need immediate care, please call Jackie anytime on her personal cell phone. There is no such thing as a minor question. I would rather you call me than wonder and not do the right thing, so please call my office, text me, or email me anytime.
- **IF AT ANY POINT YOU EXPERIENCE SHORTNESS OF BREATH, PLEASE VISIT YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY ROOM PROMPTLY AS THIS COULD INDICATE A PULMONARY EMBOLISM (BLOOD CLOT IN LUNG)**
- Any questions in regards to scheduling or confirming appointments should be communicated with the office staff (not Jackie) at 949-515-4111. If it is the weekend, please contact your surgical coordinator (Maryam or Kim) with those questions.

You may call, text, or email Jackie (PA-C), with any questions or concerns at 818-681-5882 or at jacqueline@drdubrow.com. Please include your name, surgery, date of surgery, and question in text message or voicemail.