

INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING BREAST PROCEDURES

Please keep these instructions on hand for review until you are completely healed from your procedure.

Care Of The Incisions

- If you have steristrips on the incisions, leave them on until you return for your one week follow-up appointment; we will remove them.
- If you don't have steristrips, apply Bacitracin to sutures 2 - 3 times per day. You may clean the incisions with soap and water as needed. Do not use anything else on the suture lines.
- Avoid sun & tanning bed exposure to the incisions for 4 - 6 months and wear a good sunscreen. This decreases the risk of a noticeable scar. Be aware that heat alone, without direct sun exposure, may cause dark pigmented scars.

Medications

- Take your prescribed medications as directed. Usually taking two Tylenol will relieve any discomfort. If this is not effective, you may take the pain medication as prescribed. You will experience quite a bit more pain if the implants are placed under the muscle.
- Take your muscle spasm medication every 4-6 hours as needed. Spasms are the burning, shooting pains that you feel in your breast and nipple area.
- Eat when taking your medications to avoid nausea and vomiting. Eat a light meal the night after surgery. You may resume your regular diet on the following day.
- Do not take aspirin or aspirin-containing medications for 10 days after surgery. Other routinely taken medications may be taken as necessary.

Breast Care

- Do not massage the breasts unless we give you specific instructions to do so.
- Depending on the placement of your implants, we will instruct you on what type of bra to wear for the first month. Some patients are instructed to not wear a bra at all; others may wear a sports bra and others an underwire. We will instruct you; every patient is different.
- After one month, it is very important that you wear a good supportive bra during your awake hours, so that you decrease the chance of having to undergo a lift in the future. This is even more important if your implants are larger than 400-500 cc. Breasts implants are heavy; large breasts eventually sag. It is important that you protect your investment and take proper care of your breasts.

Activity

- When patient gets up to go to the bathroom for the first two days, make sure patient is aided to help prevent falling.
- Do not drive for 48 hours after anesthetic sedation. If you are taking pain medications, you should be very cautious driving because your reaction time will be decreased. Also your chest is sore after implants and may affect your driving reaction time. We recommend you do not drive for at least a week and take extra time and care for the first 3 weeks.
- Sleep on your back for the first couple of weeks after surgery. Moving your arms in a circular motion may decrease soreness and pain.
- You may take a shower on the day after surgery. Do not immerse or soak yourself in water, such as, bathtub, pool, lake, ocean, or hot tub.
- While there are no limitations on light pulling, pushing or lifting, do not engage in vigorous exercise or sports for at least 3 weeks. Avoid bending over, straining, or lifting heavy objects for one week.
- Most patients return to work 5 - 7 days after surgery if implants are placed above the muscle and 7-10 days if placed under the muscle.

Expectations

- The amount of swelling varies. It is usually worse in the mornings and always eventually subsides.
- The healing process is a prolonged one. Initially the breasts will look slightly high in position. This is intentional and resists the strong and inevitable pull of gravity. Final position of the breast might take a **full 6 months** to achieve.
- One breast will fall before the other and one will be high for a longer period of time. You may feel a small "knot" under the incision; this is the dissolvable sutures used and is normal. If a suture works to the surface after the first week, you may clip with cuticle scissors or come by the office.
- One breast will hurt more and for a longer period of time than the other. Expect some shooting, burning type of discomfort in one or both breasts for several months possibly.

Postop Instructions for First Three Weeks

- No tub baths, swimming, hot tubs for a month (bacteria may enter in the nipple ducts since they are temporarily dilated after surgery). You must take showers daily.
- Avoid sun & tanning bed exposure to the incisions for 4 – 6 months and wear a good sunscreen. This decreases the risk of a noticeable scar. Be aware that heat alone, without direct sun exposure, may cause dark pigmented scars.
- Take ibuprofen 600mg once a day **IF no known type of stomach problems** such as bleeding ulcers, IRB, GERD, etc. Start 10 days after surgery and continue for three weeks. Do not take aspirin or medications that contain aspirin.
- Wear a sports bra for 24/7 for 1 month unless Dr. Bigelow instructs you differently – this provides support while your tissue is healing.
- Do not lift anything over 5 pounds for the first week after surgery. Add 5 pounds per week until you are completely healed. **DO NOT** engage in ANY type of exercise or activity that requires more energy than walking.
- Do not massage your breasts until Dr. Bigelow gives you specific instructions on this.
- You may feel a stitch or a small bump in the incision sometime over the next several weeks. This is the dissolvable sutures used and is normal. If it is irritating you – you may clip it with cuticle scissors, come by the office, or let us know when you return for your next follow up appointment and we will clip it.
- No mouth to nipple contact for 3 months (infection prevention).
- Be sure you have your Implant Card (it contains your size and serial numbers of your implants). Be sure you apply for additional insurance at Mentor.com.
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- The healing process is a prolonged one. Initially the breasts will look slightly high in position. This is intentional and resists the strong and inevitable pull of gravity. Final position of the breast might take a full **6 months** to achieve.
- One breast will fall before the other and one will be high for a longer period of time.
- One breast will hurt more and for a longer period of time than the other. Expect some shooting, burning type of discomfort in one or both breasts for several months possibly.
- If you have any concerns or questions, please contact our office at 256-259-5950.

Instructions for the Rest of Your Life

- Keep your implant cards (the card that has the size, lot number, and serial number of your implants) with your important papers – such as your S.S. card, birth and marriage certificates.
- Lay on your implants for at least 2 hours at night FOREVER.
- Squeeze your breasts daily FOREVER.
- Take Vitamin E 800 -1000 u daily FOREVER.
- Avoid mouth of nipple contact for 3 months (infection prevention).
- Do not have your nipples pierced.
- Take Prophylactic antibiotics before dental appointments including cleanings.
- Expect to have an occasional twinge of discomfort, usually this is just normal aches and pains of the chest wall and has nothing to do with the implants.
- Wear a good bra (sturdy, non-elastic straps) daily to support the weight of the implants. As you age, the breasts have a tendency to fall, which can often be accelerated by the weight of the implants. Some of this may be avoided by wearing a bra as often as possible especially when doing impact sporting activities.
- Sometimes it can be difficult to find a good bra. We recommend Playtex, Bali, Hanes Her Way, or Curvation (Wal-Mart) bras. You may also visit BraSmyth.com or can call 800-BRA (272)-9466 for a catalog.
- If you begin to feel that the breasts are becoming more firm or developing a capsule, you should come in for an evaluation as soon as possible. Medical treatment for capsules is more likely to be effective if treated early. If you have a deflation, you should come in for an evaluation as soon as possible.
- If you have silicone implants, the FDA recommends you have a MRI every 3 years.
- Dr. Bigelow will provide follow up office visits for evaluation of your implants for life at no charge.