

## **Liposuction Post-Operative Care Instructions**

### **Going Home**

You should not plan to drive yourself home. It is recommended that you have a responsible adult at home with you on the day of surgery.

### **Diet**

If you have had liposuction totally by local anesthesia, you may resume your usual diet immediately. Drink adequate amounts of water, fruit juices or soft drinks to prevent dehydration. Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages for 48 hours before and after surgery. If you had liposuction under general anesthesia, then start with liquid diet (juice, soup) and then advance to regular diet as tolerated. This will help with possible nausea you may have after general anesthesia.

### **Physical Activity**

Quiet rest is recommended for the first few hours immediately after liposuction surgery. Do not drive or operate hazardous machinery for 18 hours after surgery. Later in the day or evening of surgery you may take a short walk if desired. The day after liposuction surgery you should feel well enough to drive your car and engage in light to moderate physical activities. You may carefully resume exercise and vigorous physical activity 2 to 4 days after surgery. It is suggested that you begin with 25% of your normal workout and then increase your daily activity as tolerated. Most people can return to a desk job within 1-2 days after surgery, although one must expect to be sore and easily fatigued for several days.

### **Elastic Compression Garments**

Beginning the day after surgery, the post-op garments may be removed daily to permit you to shower and to wash the garments. Garment should be worn day and night until 24 hours beyond the time when all the drainage has completely stopped. Do not be concerned if you have drainage for several days. Discontinuing the use of the garments and binders too early may result in more prolonged drainage. Typically, patients will need to wear the garments for 3 to 6 days. Some patients, especially after a large amount of liposuction, will have drainage for more than a week. Many patients choose to wear the garments for a greater duration simply because of the comfort the garments provide. Wearing the post-op garment for more than the minimal number of days provides no significant advantage in terms of the ultimate cosmetic results.

### **Dizziness and Fainting**

Patients may experience a brief sensation of dizziness the morning after surgery, when the garments are first removed in order to take a shower. Feeling lightheaded is similar to what you might experience when standing-up too quickly. It is the result of rapid decompression of the legs after the post-op garments are removed. Should dizziness occur, simply sit or lie down until it passes. Dizziness may be prevented by removing the outer compression garment 10 minutes before removing the second garment.

### **Managing Post-Op Drainage**

One should expect a large volume of blood-tinged anesthetic solution to drain from the small incisions during the first 24 to 48 hours following tumescent liposuction. In general, the more drainage there is, the less bruising and swelling there will be. For the first 24 to 48 hours, bulky super-absorbent pads are worn overlying the treated areas, and under the compression garments. After most of the drainage has stopped, patients need only place absorbent pads over the incision sites that continue to drain.

### **Leaks Are Possible**

During the first 36 hours, when sitting or lying down, you should place absorbent terrycloth towels beneath you in order to protect your furniture from any unexpected leak of blood-tinged drainage. When there is a large amount of drainage, it is advisable to place a plastic sheet beneath the towel.

### **Wound Care & Bathing**

Keep incisions clean. Shower once or twice daily. First wash your hands, then wash incisions gently with soap and water; afterwards gently pat incisions dry with a clean towel. If dissolving stitches and glue was used, then there is no need for any further wound care. Simply place dressing or new absorbent pads over the incision. When an incision has ceased draining for more than 24 hours, it no longer needs to be covered by pads. If permanent stitches were used, please apply antibiotic ointment (triple antibiotic, Neosporin, polysporin, bacitracin) over incision twice daily for 5 days then allow to dry. Again, please cover this with bandage, dressing or absorbent pads.

### **Stitch / Suture Removal**

If permanent stitches were used, then they will need to be removed in 5-7 days. Please return to our office around that time for stitch removal. If dissolving stitches were used, then you don't have to worry about having them removed.

### **Take Antibiotics**

Take antibiotics as directed until the prescription is finished. Take antibiotics with food. Call our office if you notice signs of infection such as fever, foul smelling drainage, or focal redness, swelling, or pain in a treated area.

### **Do NOT's**

Do NOT apply ice-packs or a heating pad to skin overlying the areas treated by liposuction.

Do NOT soak in a bath, Jacuzzi, swimming pool, or the ocean for at least 7 days after surgery in order to minimize the risk of infection.

### **Nausea**

Nausea and vomiting are among the side effects that may be associated with liposuction. Nausea can be caused by antibiotics, lorazepam, or local anesthesia.

### **Menstrual Irregularities**

Menstrual irregularities may occur for a month or so after liposuction. Premature or delayed onset of monthly menstruation is a possible side effect of any significant surgery.

### **Temperature Elevation**

Slight temperature elevation during the first 48 hours after surgery is a natural consequence of the body's reaction to surgical trauma.

### **Inflammation, Swelling**

Inflammation, swelling, and soreness are expected consequences of liposuction. Two extra-strength Tylenol should be taken every 4 hours while awake for the first 48 hours to reduce postoperative soreness and inflammation. Discomfort and soreness is worse the second day after surgery, then improves daily.

### **Avoid Aspirin and Ibuprofen**

For 3 days after surgery do not take aspirin or ibuprofen or similar NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as Bufferin, Anacin, Advil or Nuprin. NSAIDS can promote bleeding by impairing platelet function. NSAIDS also depress the immune response to infection by impairing white blood cell function.

### **Bruising**

Bruising is minimal with tumescent liposuction. Nevertheless, the more extensive the liposuction surgery, the more bruising one can expect. Some patients have more of a tendency to bruise than others.

### **Pain and Swelling**

Pain and swelling due to an inflammatory reaction to surgical trauma may occur and increase 5 to 10 days after surgery. Notify your surgeon if there is a dramatic increase in pain or swelling.

### **Itching**

Itching of the treated areas several days after surgery may occur as part of the normal healing process. To help relieve the itching, you may try taking Benadryl as directed on the packaging. Be aware that Benadryl causes drowsiness. You may also try using oatmeal soap. After the 7th postoperative day, provided that the incisions are well healed, you may soak in a bath with an oatmeal bath preparation. Benadryl and oatmeal products may be purchased at most drugstores.