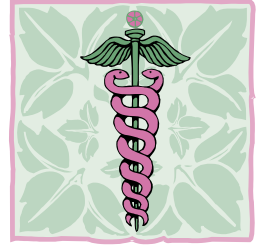


Dana M. Coberly, M.D.
BRACHIOPLASTY (ARM LIFT)
After Care Instructions



- It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent postoperative problems. Take deep breaths or use the plastic incentive spirometer often provided for you at the hospital.
- It is important to walk frequently. You should only lift your arms less than 90 degrees at the shoulder for the first 10-14 days to minimize tension on the suture line. Sleep with your arms on 2-3 pillows to minimize swelling. This will improve the quality of your scar.
- A light diet is best for the day of surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups and jello. You can start with a soft regular diet the next day.
- Stay on a soft diet for 2-3 days and avoid spicy food which can cause nausea and gas.
- If you have discomfort/anxiety, take the medication prescribed every 4-6 hours. It is best to take the medication with crackers, jello, etc. Do not take the pain medication if you do not have pain. Do not drink alcohol while taking the pain and/or anxiety medication.
- Keep your drainage bulbs collapsed and record time and amounts of drainage over a 24-hour period. Each patient heals differently, and Dr. Coberly will make the final decisions regarding drain removal.
- Wear a compression garment continuously for 14 days. You may remove it to shower starting on day 3 if instructed to do so by Dr. Coberly.
- Apply antibiotic ointment to incisions twice daily for 2 days only.
- You can expect swelling of the surgery site. If the swelling on one side is definitely more pronounced on one side than the other side, or if you are having pain which is NOT relieved by the pain medication, call Dr. Coberly at 813-259-1550.
- Excessive and strenuous activities should be avoided for 3 weeks. Keep your heart rate below 100 beats per minute during that time and do not lift more than 10 lbs. (approximately the weight of a gallon of milk).
- Please do not drive for 7-10 days and do not drive while taking narcotic pain medication. Do not take aspirin or products containing aspirin for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Moderate swelling of the arms is to be expected. You may find that your clothes do not fit as easily as before. Be patient. The swelling will gradually subside and you will be back to normal in 3-6 months.

You may begin swimming 4 weeks after surgery.

- If you notice some vaginal burning and itching (vaginitis) as a result of the antibiotic given after surgery, Dr. Coberly or your family physician can prescribe *Diflucan*, or yeast medications can be purchased over the counter. Ask your pharmacist for assistance.
- Infrequently after the drains have been removed, additional fluid will build up in the arms. If this happens, please contact Dr. Coberly, as the fluid may need to be removed.
- All incisions will be extremely sensitive during the healing phase. Direct sun is to be avoided. When going out, even on cloudy days, use a sunscreen with SPF 15 or greater for at least 1 year that has both UVA and UVB protection.
- If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please contact your doctor.
- If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101 degrees), redness, or increased pain or swelling at the surgical incisions, please call your doctor.
- Suggestions to relieve abdominal discomfort or indigestion after surgery:
 - Drink plenty of water – 8 glasses a day!
 - Drink warm liquids (tea or coffee).
 - Prune juice mixed with 7-up (half and half) for constipation.
 - If severely constipated, use *Milk of Magnesia*, white *Karo* syrup (2 tablespoons twice a day taken with one glass of warm water), stool softeners (*Colace*), and *Fleet* enemas (regular or oil retention) as a last resort.
 - Walking helps the circulation in the whole body.

