

Post Operative Care Instructions For Latissimus Dorsi Flaps

1. There will be drains in place in each breast. The drains will be removed approximately 3-15 days after surgery. You will need to keep a record of the amount of drainage from each drain on the sheet provided. Please record all drainage amounts in mL's (milliliters) or cc's, not ounces.
2. You will be discharged from the hospital 1-4 days following surgery. Pieces of tape will be present along all suture lines. These pieces should be left in place.
3. You will experience discomfort for a day or two that can be controlled with medication. You should never attempt to drive when taking medications that cause drowsiness. Motion may be painful for a few days.
4. You will be instructed when to return to the office. You will be allowed to shower once the drains are removed. Until then you should sponge bathe only. You should secure your drains so that they do not swing. Nylon "fanny-packs" work well to hold the drains or you can tie them to a shoe string around your neck.
5. If you have a tissue expander in place you may hear "swishing" of fluid around the implant. Expansion usually begins about 2 weeks after surgery.
6. Swelling and skin discoloration will subside in the first 2-3 weeks after surgery. Return to normal activity will depend on how you heal and how you feel. You will be up soon after surgery, but you should refrain from excessive movement and lifting more than 10 pounds for 4 weeks following surgery. Walking is very good for you and you should walk several times a day.
7. You can expect itching, and perhaps some occasional sharp shooting pains over the sides of your breasts for 4-6 weeks.
8. **NO SMOKING FOR 2 WEEKS BEFORE AND 6 WEEKS after surgery.** Smoking reduces the blood supply to your skin and impairs your body's ability to heal.
9. No heavy exercise or heavy lifting for 4-6 weeks after surgery. We are pleased if you feel great after surgery and want to jump right back in the swing of things, but **DON'T DO IT!** Heavy lifting and exercise increases the pressures in your vessels and may cause you to bleed.
10. **DO NOT** take aspirin or aspirin products, Vitamin E, diet pills or herbal medications such as St. John's Wort for **14 days before or one month after** surgery. This includes Motrin, Advil, Alleve and Ibuprofen. Tylenol is OK. If you take aspirin as prescribed by another physician, please call our office to discuss exceptions.

If you should need to reach Dr. Coberly after hours or during the weekend please call (813) 448-6550 choose extension #6 to reach the answering service.