

Breast Reconstuction/Tissue Expansion Instructions

Dr. Rajiv Sood

(317)278-1022

SURGERY DATE _____

TWO WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Due to the interference of smoking on wound healing- you **must STOP SMOKING at least one month** (highly recommended to stop at least 2-3 months before) your surgery and until complete healing has occurred after surgery. Smoking significantly reduces your body's ability to bring oxygen to tissue for proper healing. Necrosis (death of tissue) is the result.
2. Do not ingest any brand of aspirin, or any of the following aspirin containing products, MAO inhibiting and serotonin drugs for 14 days prior to and 14 days after surgery. These may cause increased bleeding and will interfere with your surgery. **Notify our office of all medications, herbals, oils, supplements, and suspensions that you are taking.** If you need an aspirin-free fever reducer/pain reliever, take Tylenol.
3. Many herbal supplements are contraindicated with anesthesia or surgery in general. Some to **avoid** are: Vitamin E, Garlic, Ginger, Alfalfa, Cayenne Pepper, Feverfew, Chamomile, DongQuai root, Willow Bark, Goldenseal, Guarana, Horse Chestnut, Bilberry, Gingko, Gingko biloba, Selenium, Ginseng, St. John's Wort, Yohimbe, Licorice root, Melatonin, Kava Kava, Hawthorn, Lemon verbena, Muwort, Lavender, Valerian/Valerian root, Echinacea, Ma Huang (Ephedra), and Gotu Kola. Also, avoid Ackee fruit, Alfalfa, Aloe, Argimony, Barley, Bitter melon, Burdock root, Carrot oil, Chromium, Coriander, Dandelion root, Devil's club, Eucalyptus, Fenugreek seeds, Fo-ti, large amounts of garlic, Ginseng, Grape seed, Guayusa, Gmena, Juniper, Nem seed oil, large amounts of onions, Periwinkle, and Yellow root, as these all alter the blood glucose level.
4. If you develop a change in your health condition including a cold, cough, or fever, please call the office immediately.
5. Expect a pre-operative phone call from the nurse. If you have not received a call, please notify the office at 317-630-2495. Please have information ready regarding pharmacy phone number, where you will be recovering including phone number, what medications you are taking, medical/surgical history, and any questions you may have.

DAY BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Expect a telephone call from Day Surgery the day before surgery to confirm the time in which you will need to arrive at the hospital. If you do not receive a call by 4:00 pm, please call (317)274-5000 and ask to be connected with one of the Day Surgery admitting nurses.

SURGERY LOCATION _____ **ARRIVAL TIME** _____

2. Most importantly, **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT THE NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY.** This includes alcohol, water, hard candy, or chewing gum.

3. Prepare any food ahead of time for after surgery. You can make things that can easily be reheated, because you may not want to take the time to cook immediately following surgery. Also, having jello and broth available is recommended.

MORNING OF SURGERY:

1. NO EATING OR DRINKING. You may take morning medications related to high blood pressure or a heart condition with a small sip of water. Do not take insulin unless instructed by your doctor.
2. Do not wear contact lenses, hairpins, hairpieces, jewelry, make-up, fingernail, or toenail polish. It is recommended to remove artificial nails. Dress in loose comfortable clothes.
3. Have someone drive you to your surgery and make certain someone will be available to take you home. YOU MUST HAVE AN ADULT WITH YOU THAT CAN DRIVE YOU HOME. NO TAXICABS OR BUS RIDES HOME ARE ALLOWED.

AT HOME AFTER SURGERY:

1. You can expect to stay in the hospital one to two days after surgery dependent on your recovery from surgery and what Dr. Sood has ordered. It is recommended to have an adult available to help care for you the first 24 hours home after surgery. You will be required to make a follow-up appointment to be seen within the next week. You can expect to have appointments every one to two weeks to inflate the expanders with sterile saline. This is usually complete over a period of four to eight weeks or until you and Dr. Sood feel comfortable with the size.
2. Begin with a light diet after surgery. Examples of things to try are jello, broth, and popsicles. It is best to take pain medicine with toast or crackers to prevent an upset stomach. Slowly progress to a regular diet as tolerated.
3. You will be prescribed an antibiotic and pain medication. It is necessary to take prescription medications exactly as directed. Do not take more than the recommended amount of medications. If you have any questions, please call our office.
4. If you have pain or discomfort, take the pain medication every 4 hours. Alcohol must be avoided while on pain medication. Please be aware that pain medication can cause constipation. You can start stool softeners before surgery, drink plenty of water, drink prune juice, or use a laxative if needed. No driving or operating heavy equipment/machinery while taking prescribed pain medication.
5. Small drains may be used after surgery. These drains will remove any excess fluid that may develop. It is important to write down how much fluid is emptied. The fluid will need to be removed from the bulb twice a day or more if needed. After emptying the fluid, squeeze the bulb as you are closing the drain. Please **keep a record** of how much drainage is emptied and bring this record with you to each

appointment. It is not unusual to have occasional pieces of material pass through the drain. This represents particles of fat or protein and is okay. If the drain(s) falls out- DO NOT attempt to push it back in. This can cause infection. Remove the drain if it has fallen out and cover the opening with dry gauze. The drain site will close in approximately 24-48 hours.

6. Sleeping with your head and shoulders elevated is recommended. Use at least two pillows behind your back to prop you up.
7. All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact is to be avoided and use a sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater for at least 6 months.
8. You make shower on your third post-op day. At this time remove any dressings and inspect incisions. Steri-strips will stay on for two weeks and gradually fall off. If they are still in place after two weeks, you can remove them. You may call the office if you have questions about your incisions. Clean with mild soap and water. Gently pat dry and cover with gauze dressings.
9. Wear your surgical bra or camisole for two weeks after surgery or ask Dr. Sood when you can wear a different bra. This bra needs to be worn around the clock. No underwire bras until Dr. Sood clears you to wear one. If you are unsure about wearing a certain bra, please bring it to your appointment and check with Dr. Sood first. If you are having difficulty finding a bra, please contact Karen Kreutzinger with *Expression: A Store For Women* at 317-688-2821. She specializes in surgical bras and camisoles.
10. Avoid strenuous activity until cleared by Dr. Sood. It is important to get out of bed and do light walking as soon as possible to reduce the risk of blood clots and other complications. General activities of daily living may be resumed with in a couple of days. If you notice discomfort, decrease the amount of activity you are doing. Sexual activity should be avoided for one to two weeks following surgery or until cleared by Dr. Sood. Avoid lifting objects heavier than 10 lbs for 6-8 weeks.
11. No driving until after your first post-op appointment and when you are off your prescription pain medication.
12. Bruising, swelling, numbness, sharpness, and burning are common after breast surgery. These will subside over the next several weeks.
13. *****Important*** If you have increased redness, increased swelling, foul-smelling wound drainage, wound separation, severe pain, or temperature of >101.5, NOTIFY DR. SOOD'S OFFICE.** These can be signs or symptoms of infection and need immediate attention.
14. Do not hesitate to call our office if you have further questions.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Breast reconstruction typically involves several procedures performed in multiple stages. You can have your reconstruction at the same time as your mastectomy, or delayed (after a patient has healed and recovered from additional treatments.) The first procedure is usually the most complex.
2. The use of tissue expanders for breast reconstruction involves a two-stage process. A tissue expander, which is a temporary implant with a special port, is inserted in surgery. It is similar to a balloon and is then filled over time in clinic to increase the size of the breast mound. As the tissue expander fills, the tissue stretches similarly to the abdomen of a pregnant woman. Do not be worried about the shape of this implant. A second operation is performed to place a permanent breast implant.
3. As stated earlier, you can expect to be inflated every one to two weeks for about four to eight weeks. Your chest wall may be numb from the mastectomy surgery and therefore, you may not feel pain from the placement of the tissue expander. You may feel pressure, tightness, or discomfort after each filling of the expander. This feeling will decrease as the skin stretches. You may take Tylenol before a filling and/or after the filling process.
4. Once you have reached a size that you and Dr. Sood are happy with, you will rest for about six to eight weeks. After this time you will go back for a second operation to place a permanent implant. The permanent implant will not be adjustable like the tissue expander. You will be able to discuss with Dr. Sood what type of implant is right for you.
5. After you have your permanent implant and complete healing has occurred you may decide to have nipple reconstruction. This can be done in the hospital under local anesthesia with sedation or general anesthesia depending on the extent of adjustments made to the breast and surrounding areas.
6. After healing from nipple reconstruction, usually about one to two months, you may choose to have your areolas tattooed. This is done in clinic and requires no sedation.