

Dr Lowe's: Breast Reconstruction Instructions

Pre-operative:

- 1) Patient should not eat anything after midnight, and hold medicines if instructed
- 2) Avoid aspirin, blood thinners, and arthritis medications prior to surgery
- 3) Ensure that the surgeon is aware of all your medical problems and allergies
- 4) Questions regarding your diagnosis should be directed to your breast surgeon
- 5) The reconstructive options are dependent on your situation
- 6) Your case will be scheduled as soon as possible
- 7) You can ask to obtain prescriptions for medications in advance
- 8) Make sure all your questions have been answered prior to surgery
- 9) Brochures and videos are available for review if requested
- 10) Photographs are required for documentation purposes
- 11) Some patients require blood transfusions and skin flaps sometimes open or die
- 11) Your surgical pathology may change the treatment plan

Hospital Stay:

- 1) Expect to stay 2-7 days depending on your surgery
- 2) All patients have drains to avoid fluid collections and swelling
- 3) Surgery is usually performed at Barnes North/ Jewish Hospital
- 4) Follow activity instructions closely to decrease complications
- 5) You will be able to control your pain medications
- 6) A case worker will evaluate you for assistance after discharge
- 7) Many different doctors will be seeing you to assist with your care
- 8) I will be responsible for your post-reconstructive care

Day of Discharge:

- 1) Measure drain output every 24 hours and record
- 2) Limit left arm motion to 45 degrees to the side
- 3) Avoid any arm exercises unless instructed by surgeon
- 4) You will be taught how to strip and care for your drains
- 5) Take medications as instructed and call if they are not tolerated
- 6) Ambulate and sit in chair during normal daytime hours
- 7) Limit activity to around the house for the first week
- 8) Call PSDA, (405) 749- 4227 to schedule follow-up appointment within a week

First Several Weeks:

- 1) Follow the surgeons wound instructions first and foremost
- 2) Be prepared for contradictory instructions from different health care providers
- 3) Again, **follow the surgeon's instruction** and call if it is unclear
- 4) Obtain a sports bra and bring to the first clinic appointment, no under wires
- 5) You may shower the day after discharge, quickly without dressings
- 6) Limit shower to less than 20 minutes until all drains are removed
- 7) Do not shower for 24 hours after drain removal
- 7) Call the office if you have any questions or concerns
- 8) Call if flap changes - significant swelling, bleeding, redness, or signs of infection
- 9) Notify Alesia of your 24-hour drain output every 3-4 days
- 10) Your surgeon will increase your shoulder activity when wound is stable
- 11) May leave the house for several hours by the second week
- 12) Use good judgment and ask questions if you're not sure.

Thank you for taking the time to review these instructions. I will do my best to take good care of or your loved one. Warmest Regards, *James B. Lowe, MD*