



POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Dr. Ben Brown & Ashley Chandler MD

A successful surgery requires a cooperative relationship with you and your surgeon. Once your surgery is completed, you must follow all the instructions given to you in order to heal properly and have a good outcome. We strongly encourage you to ask your surgeon for guidance and avoid the recommendations of friends, family and the internet.

Both sides of your body heal differently: One side of your body may look or feel quite different from the other in the days following surgery. This is normal.

Common symptoms after surgery include the following:

- Tightness and stiffness
- Bruising, swelling and redness
- Numbness, tingling, burning or intermittent shooting pain
- Skin firmness, hypersensitivity or lack of sensitivity
- Mild severe itchy feeling (an antihistamine like Benadryl can help to alleviate this)
- Swelling can cause the skin in treated areas to appear shiny

CALL THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY (850) 500-7527 IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A high fever, (over 101°)
- Severe nausea and vomiting that prevents you from eating or taking the prescribed medications
- Persistent dizziness or incoherent behavior, such as hallucinations.
- Pain that is not managed by the medication plan provided to you.
- Bright red skin that is hot to the touch.
- Excessive bleeding or fluid seeping through the incisions.
- A severely misshapen region anywhere on your body or bruising that is localized to one specific point.
- If you have drains, you may experience additional localized discomfort such as constant sharp pain.

Showering

- If you only had liposuction or fat transfer, you may shower the same day of surgery.
- If you had **no implants** placed, you may shower 24 hours after surgery.
- If you had any **implants or mesh placed**, you may shower 48 hours after surgery.
- It is ok to shower with a drain



Swimming or Bathing

- 3 weeks after surgery
- You cannot go swimming or take a bath if you have a drain in place or if you have any open wounds.

Exercising

- 4-week after surgery you may transition back to exercising.
- If you had any muscles cut or tightened (tummy tuck, hernia repair, DIEP flap, breast augmentation under the muscle) do not lift more than **10 pounds for 6-weeks**.

Diet & Nutrition for Best Results

- Dieting or restricting calories for weight control is discouraged for 6-weeks after surgery
- Staying hydrated by drink plenty of fluids is encouraged
 - Avoid sugary juices and beverages
 - You should be urinating every 4-6 hours
 - Your urine should be clear to pale yellow and not cloudy or dark yellow.
- A high protein diet using healthy proteins (Chicken, Beef, Fish, Nuts & Beans) will improve healing.
- We strongly recommend that you eat at least 100 grams of protein (or more) each day for **1 week** before surgery and for **6 weeks** after surgery.
- Protein supplements will help get you there but should not be used to replace meals.

Drains

- It is best to keep up with emptying your drains at regularly scheduled times.
- When a drain is full it will temporarily stop functioning (sucking), which can cause fluid to build up and the drain to become clogged or clot off.
- Empty drains when they get **half full**.
- Record the date, time and volume of fluid removed using the lines on the bulb for reference.
- You can also use an iPhone app called "Surgical Drain Logger."
- **We can remove a drain in the office when it makes less than 25mL in 24 hours.**

Garment(s) – Abdominal Binders, Body Suits and Bras

- Post-operative garments provide comfort and support the healing process.
- If you go home with an abdominal binder:
 - Remove and reposition the binder frequently throughout the day
 - Wear the binder for most of the day until you are seen in the office for the 2-week post-operative visit.
 - You may take the garment(s) and binder off to shower and wash it.
- You are strongly encouraged to wear the recommended garment(s) for most of the day/night for 4-weeks, after which you may wear it for 12 hours during the day.
- You can stop wearing the garment(s) 6 weeks after surgery.



Incision and Scar care

- All incisions leave a scar
- Scars take up to 1-years to fully evolve
- Following our recommendations will minimize the appearance of scars
- The tape applied to your incisions immediately after surgery (SteriStrips) need to be removed after 7-days.
- We will teach you how to apply paper tape to your incisions during your post-operative visits.
 - Change tape every 5 to 7 days for 5-weeks.
 - Do not apply any creams or ointments during this time.
 - Sunlight makes scars look bad therefore you are strongly encouraged to use sunblock containing zinc oxide or titanium on your incision when sun exposure is possible.
 - Bathing suits do not protect your incisions from the damaging effects of sun.

After Any Surgery

Swelling, discomfort, tightness and tingling are to be expected in the immediate 6 – 12 weeks. Sensory Changes, Tingling, numbness and swelling can persist up to a year. Bruising can take 2-3 weeks to subside and swelling can persist up to 3-6 months, The final appearance of your incisions take 12 months for them to fully mature.

Post-operative appointments should be scheduled for:

- It is your responsibility to keep all post-operative appointments.
- Failure to keep your post-operative appointments can result in poor outcomes.
- In general, we will see you:
 - 1-3 days after surgery
 - 1-2 weeks after surgery or whenever a drain is ready to come out
 - 3 months after surgery
 - 6 months after surgery
 - 1 year after surgery