

Abdominoplasty (Tummy Tuck) Post-Operative Instructions

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Make sure to walk 3 times a day for at least 5 minutes each time.
- Don't eat anything spicy for the first 24 hours.
- You may take up to 600mg of ibuprofen every 6 hours after your surgery. Studies have shown ibuprofen to be equivalent to Norco in pain reduction and they do not cause constipation.
- You have been prescribed Norco medication only if nothing else works. This medication will cause constipation, nausea, bloating, and grogginess so only take this medication for severe pain.
- Do NOT take aspirin or any products containing aspirin until approved by your physician.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications for 6 weeks before and after your procedure.
- You may take off stockings in 24 hours
- Please put antibiotic ointment on belly button twice a day.

Activities

- Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots. Walk three times a day including the day of surgery.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (Norco).
- No lifting greater than 8 lbs (a gallon of milk). for 6 weeks.
- No sexual activity for 2 weeks and resume as comfort permits.
- Avoid straining of abdominal muscles. Strenuous core exercise/lifting is restricted for 6 weeks.
- Return to work in 2-4 weeks.

Incision Care

- You may shower 24 hours after surgery.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep steri-strips on.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- No baths, hot tub or swimming for 6 weeks.
- Apply Antibiotic ointment to belly button twice a day
- Place daily soft dressing over incisions and around drain sites to wick away moisture
- Sleep with head slightly elevated and pillows under your knees to decrease tension on your incision.

What to Expect

- You may experience temporary pain, soreness, numbness of abdominal skin, incision discomfort.
- Maximum discomfort will occur the first few days.

- You will have bruising and swelling of the abdomen. The majority of bruising and swelling will subside in 6-8 weeks. Some swelling will persist for 6 months.
- You may feel tired for several weeks or months.

Appearance

- Flatter, firmer abdomen with narrower waistline.
- You will walk slightly bent forward and gradually return to normal posture over next 3 weeks.
- Scars will be reddened for 6 months. After that, they will fade and soften.
- The scar will extend from near one hipbone to the other, low on the abdomen.

Follow-Up Care

- Abdominal drains will be removed when less than 20 ml per day for 2 days in a room for 24-48 hours.
- Surface stitches removed in 5-14 days.
- As soon as your stitches come out, Dr. Barrett recommends Skinuva twice daily for 12 weeks to reduce the scar appearance.

When To Call

- If you have increased swelling or bruising.
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as, rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.

If you do need to seek a hospital, please go to your nearest emergency room or

St. Johns Hospital 2121 Santa Monica Blvd, Santa Monica, CA