

Liposuction

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS



INTRODUCTION

The following is a list of general expectations and instructions for your care following liposuction. Please thoroughly read these instructions, as most of your questions should be answered here. Instructions for your care will be reviewed with you again the morning after your procedure.

Following these instructions carefully should help you get the best results from your surgery.

POSTOPERATIVE CARE

Help at Home

It is very important to have a strong support system during the post-op period. You must have someone drive you home after surgery and be available to assist you through the night if necessary. You will not undergo treatment if these arrangements have not been made. It is normal for a patient to become light-headed when rising from a sitting or lying position or when removing garments and dressings; this is why it's important to have someone with you to help.

Medications

Prescriptions for post-op medications will electronically prescribed at the same time as your medications for the procedure itself. You will be given a prescription pain medication. If you have a history of nausea while taking pain medications, you may also be given a prescription for this. If you are unable to take any of the medications, please contact our office so we can arrange for other medications to be prescribed.

- **Pain:** You will be prescribed a pain medication for post-operative pain control. If your discomfort after treatment is minor you are welcomed to take Tylenol in place of the prescribed medication. Do not exceed 4,000 mg of Tylenol in any 24-hour period. Take medication with food to minimize risk of nausea. You may use Benadryl if you experience itching. If symptoms persist, please contact our office.
- **Nausea:** A common side effect after strong medications are used. If you are experiencing nausea, we advise that you take your nausea medication.
- **Constipation:** You may experience constipation if taking pain relievers. MiraLAX or other over the counter laxatives are recommended. Do not wait to take until you are constipated.

- **Medications to Avoid:** Take only those medications approved or prescribed by your physician.

Drainage

For the first 24 to 72 hours after surgery, you should expect a large volume of blood-tinged watery solution to drain from the incision sites. The amount of drainage will vary, but generally the more drainage there is, the less bruising and swelling there will be. A few of the incision sites may drain for up to one week. Even though the fluid is red, it is only about 1% blood with the remainder being local anesthetic and tissue fluid. Maxi-pads are good options for bandages over your incision sites; bandages must be changed daily to prevent infection.

Incisions

Once the incision sites stop draining, they will need to be cleaned with soap and water. If there is a chance that your garments will rub the incision sites, you will want to cover the incisions with a Band-Aid. If you had several areas of surgery, you will have several incision sites and will need help changing your bandages.

Compression Garments

After your surgery, you will be given a surgical garment to wear. This surgical garment may be an abdominal binder or a compression garment or both. **For the first four weeks after your surgery, your surgical garment is to be worn 24 hours a day.** During this time, you can remove your garment once a day to launder them, change your bandages and shower. If your surgical garment was placed on you inside out, please continue to wear it inside out; this will assure no irritation from the seams. During weeks five through six following your surgery, you have the option to wear your surgical garment 12 hours a day or as directed by the physician.

Massage

Therapeutic massage is very helpful in speeding up the healing process. Light lymphatic massage will be performed at post-op appointments but you can begin professional massages one week after surgery and this may be done as often as every other day and as hard as tolerated.

Activity

You should rest for the first 12 hours after surgery and take it easy for the first week. Following this time, you may begin to resume normal activities, as tolerated. If you experience more than mild swelling or discomfort, you may be overdoing it. Whirlpools and hot tubs are not permitted until 3 weeks after treatment.

Sun Exposure

Avoid sun bathing until the bruising has faded. Do not apply heat or ice to the surgical areas.

Bathing

You may shower the day following surgery. Remove your garment and dressings. Replace compression garment after your shower.

No tub baths or Jacuzzi until your incisions have healed, and approved by your physician, which is usually around 3 weeks. It is best to wait one month for hot tubs as they tend to have more bacteria than regular chlorinated swimming pools.

Sexual Intercourse

Sexual activity can be resumed when you feel ready with no restrictions and incisions have adequately healed.

Return to Work

Most patients require at least the next day off work depending on their job responsibilities. Returning to work with a light schedule initially or even part-time can be beneficial as well.

Diet, Nausea and Vomiting

Diet and meals are not restricted. Please make sure to drink plenty of clear fluids; we recommend eight glasses of water or fruit juice a day. Do not drink any alcohol for the 48 hours before and after surgery, and limit alcohol intake for the first week after your surgery.

Travel

Personal operation of an automobile is prohibited after your surgery. Please use extreme caution 1-2 days following your procedure. Airline travel is restricted for 2 weeks postop. You will notice increased swelling with airline travel which can happen even 6-8 weeks postop due to the pressure changes that occur.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- **Drainage:** Drainage can occur from the incision sites for the first 24-72 hours. The drainage will be blood tinged. You may use gauze or a light pad to reinforce post-op dressings if needed.
- **Discomfort:** Postoperative discomfort usually takes the form of deep muscle soreness and usually improves during the week following surgery. It is normal to have a lot of pulling or pinching sensations for weeks and sometimes months following surgery.
- **Bruising:** You can expect to have bruising. Most bruising will resolve after about 2-3 weeks. The bruise will go from a purplish color to a yellow/green shade as it starts to resolve.
- **Swelling:** You can expect swelling throughout the healing process. Swelling is usually at its peak between days 7 and 10.
- **Itching:** Itching at the incision sites is normal for a few days. You may take Benadryl to help with this.

- **Pain:** It is normal to experience tightness, pressure, soreness, itchiness, and fatigue for several days to weeks following surgery.
- **Sensory Changes in Skin:** You may feel reduced or heightened sensation in the treated areas and at incision sites. This is normal. You can expect return of normal sensation after a few weeks to months.
- **Final Result:** It may take about 3-6 months to see final results.
- **Common Side Effects:** Menstrual irregularities with premature or delayed onset of monthly menstruation are a common side effect of any significant surgery. Flushing of the face, neck and upper chest may occur after liposuction, and may last for a day or two. Slight temperature elevation during the 48 hours following surgery is a natural consequence of the body's reaction to surgical trauma. Bruising is minimal with tumescent liposuction; however with more extensive liposuction surgery, there will be more bruising. After lower abdominal liposuction, you may experience significant swelling in the pubic area. Over time, the surgical area may turn very hard and feel numb; this scar tissue is a part of the healing process, please be patient.

DO NOT'S

- DO NOT apply hydrogen peroxide to incision sites.
- DO NOT soak in baths, jacuzzies or hot tubs until all incisions have fully healed.
- DO NOT take Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, or other blood thinners until your physician advises you it is safe.
- DO NOT apply heating pads or ice packs to the treated areas unless otherwise instructed by your physician.

CALL ONYX MEDICAL AT (801) 938-8187 IF:

- Temperature greater than 101.5
- Worsening redness around incision
- Increasing pain that is intolerable
- Pus coming from incision
- New hard lumps develop
- Shortness of breath
- Heavy bleeding