

## HAND & PLASTIC SURGERY CENTRE, P.L.C.

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*Surgery of the Hand & Upper Extremity*  
*Microvascular Surgery*  
*Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery*

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## GYNECOMASTIA POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

**NORMAL SYMPTOMS:** It is normal to experience, bruising, swelling, and some degree of discomfort following surgery. These conditions will lessen each day. Expect some loss of feeling in nipple and breast skin. Numbness will fade as nerves heal over the next six weeks or so. Ice packs can help reduce swelling and discomfort.

**SUPPORT GARMENT:** You will need to wear your support garment at all times for the next 4-6 weeks following surgery except when bathing or laundering. The garment will help reduce swelling and give support during the healing process.

**DRESSINGS/SHOWERING:** You may shower 24 hours after your operation. At this time remove any dressings. 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. Clean with mild soap and water. Gently pat dry and cover with gauze dressings to control drainage from your incisions. Due to decreased sensation, be very cautious with the water temperature.

**SOAKING:** Do NOT get into a bath tub, hot tub or swimming pool for at least 8 weeks following surgery because soaking can cause wound healing issues.

**ACTIVITY:** Avoid heavy lifting for a few weeks. As you begin to feel stronger, gradually increase how much you do, stopping when you get tired or if discomfort increases. We recommend that you wait with any physical activity until your 1st post-op visit. After your visit, you may gradually begin light exercise as tolerated. Walking is a good way to start and as your comfort level improves you may try more vigorous exercise. We encourage you not to do any aerobic activity until you are about 4 weeks post-op.

**DRIVING:** You may begin driving after your 1st post-op appointment ONLY if you are no longer taking prescription pain medication. You should feel comfortable enough to be able to wrench the steering wheel from side to side if you need.

**RETURNING TO WORK:** Returning to work will vary between patients depending on the type of job. Generally patients are off work 2-3 weeks if the job is fairly non-physical. If the job demands physical labor, you may want to take more time off. You can discuss this issue with your physician and get the necessary paperwork at that time.

**SCARS:** Scars take at least 1 year to fade and flatten. During this time, it is better that you protect them from the sun. NO exposure for the first 3 months. Even through a bathing suit, a

good deal of sunlight can reach the skin and cause damage. It is imperative that you wear a sunscreen with a skin-protective factor (SPF) of at least 30 at all times.

**NAUSEA/CONSTIPATION:** It is important for you to have someone stay with you the day of the procedure. Nausea and/or vomiting may occur while taking oral antibiotics or pain medications. Should this happen, take your medications with food. If you experience constipation, we suggest eating foods that are high in fiber and drink plenty of water (You may try over-the-counter stool softeners). Call our office if these symptoms persist

**WHEN TO CALL:**

- If you develop significant bruising across the chest
- If you experience a significant increase in pain and tenderness
- If you develop a temperature above 101° F
- Pus-like drainage
- If you develop redness (like a sunburn) and warmth around your incisions

Please remember that for the vast majority of patients the goal is significant improvement, not perfection. Please call our office at (616) 459-4131 should you have any questions or concerns.

**POST-OP APPOINTMENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRESCRIBED MEDICATION(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

Please take Narcotic/OTC medication as directed and as needed. DO NOT drive or operate machinery if you are taking a narcotic. If you are prescribed antibiotics, take as directed until gone. Taking an incomplete course can lead to recurrence of infection. Please take antibiotics with food as this may cause upset stomach. Please ask physician before you begin taking aspirin, motrin/ibuprofen or other anti-inflammatory medications, as these can increase risk of bleeding. **\*\*IF NAUSEATED, TRY NON-ACIDIC LIQUIDS, DRY TOAST OR OTHER BLAND FOODS\*\***

**Patient Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hospital Staff Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Physician Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_