



ABDOMINOPLASTY (TUMMY TUCK)

After Care Instructions

- It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent postoperative problems. This is perhaps the most important thing to do after an abdominoplasty.
- It is important to walk bent over at the hips for 5-7 days after surgery to reduce tension on the suture lines. Sleep with your hips in a flexed position and your head elevated on 2 pillows. Following these instructions will help with the quality of your scar.
- If you have discomfort/anxiety, take the medication prescribed every 4-6 hours. It is best to take the medication with crackers, jello, etc. Do not take the pain medication if you do not have pain. Do not drink alcohol while taking any pain and/or anxiety medication.
- A light diet is best for the day of surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups and jello. You can start with a soft regular diet the next day. Stay on a bland diet for 2-3 days to reduce gas. Avoid carbonated drinks.
- Keep your drainage bulbs collapsed and record time and amounts of drainage (empty every 8 hours) over a 24-hour period. Each patient heals differently, and Dr. Sorokin will make the final decisions regarding drain removal. Drains are important and must be kept closed with suction applied. Call if you have any questions about drain management. Drains usually remain in place for one week.
- It is important to note that showers are not possible while the drains are in place. Sponge baths are acceptable for hygiene.
- A compression garment is put on at the end of the operation. This must be worn at all times for four weeks. An extra garment will be issued at the first follow-up visit so that one garment may be cleaned while one is being worn. You may only remove the garment to shower until directed otherwise.
- You can expect swelling of the surgery site. If the swelling on one side is definitely more pronounced on one side than the other side, or if you are having pain which is NOT relieved by the pain medication, call Dr. Sorokin at 856-797-0202. When in doubt, call and ask.

- Excessive and strenuous activities should be avoided for 3 weeks. Keep your heart rate below 100 beats per minute during that time and do not lift more than 10 lbs. (approximately the weight of a gallon of milk). You may resume sexual activity in 6 weeks. Stress on the abdominal muscles can stretch/break the stitches if you exercise more than just walking before 4 weeks. It is good to walk for 15-20 minutes 2-3 times a day.
- Please do not drive for 7-10 days and do not drive while taking narcotic pain medication. Do not take aspirin or products containing aspirin or motrin for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Your abdomen will feel tight and you will feel full more quickly after eating. This will subside slowly over the next 6 months. Small frequent meals will likely be more tolerable than large meals.
- If you notice some vaginal burning and itching (vaginitis) as a result of the antibiotic given after surgery, Dr. Sorokin or your family physician can prescribe *Diflucan*, or yeast medications can be purchased over the counter. Ask your pharmacist for assistance.
- All incisions will be extremely sensitive during the healing phase. Direct sun is to be avoided. When going out, even on cloudy days, use a sunscreen with SPF 15 or greater for at least 1 year that has both UVA and UVB protection.
- If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please contact your Dr. Sorokin at 856.797.0202.
- If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101 degrees), redness, or increased pain or swelling at the surgical incisions, please call your Dr. Sorokin.
- Suggestions to relieve abdominal discomfort or indigestion after surgery:
 - Drink plenty of water – 8 glasses a day!
 - Drink warm liquids (tea or coffee).
 - Prune juice helps with constipation. If severely constipated, use *Milk of Magnesia*, stool softeners (*Colace*), and *Fleet* enemas (regular or oil retention) as a last resort.
 - Walking helps circulation in the whole body.