TOTONCHI
PLASTIC SURGERY

Care after Body Lift

This page contains answers to frequently asked questions regarding your care after a body lift procedure. This information will help you remember the instructions given to you after surgery.

Appearance:

- You will have mild bruising and swelling of the abdomen and lower back skin.
- There may be a “ruffled” appearance to the closure. This is normal and will flatten with time.
- **You will wear your first stage compression garment until your first post op visit without removing it. The first stage compression is worn for 4-6 weeks**.
- Then, you will convert to a second stage garment. Most patients find that a spandex or Lycra waist and tummy shaping garment are most comfortable to wear as a second stage garment.
- After 12 weeks, you may discontinue all support garments.
- The contour of your waist area will not take its final shape for several weeks after the surgery.

Activity/Bathing/Sleeping:

- It will be difficult to stand up straight for several days, and your abdomen and buttocks will feel tight.
- You should walk every day, but have someone assist you for the first few days.
- **Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs. or participate in heavy exercise for 6 weeks after the surgery**.
- After six weeks, gradually return to your normal activities and exercise routines.
- Depending on the type of work you do, you should be able to return to your job in 3-4 weeks or as soon as you are comfortable. If your job does not require heavy activity, you should be able to go back in three weeks.
- You may drive when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication and feel comfortable.
- **You may sponge bath, but no showers until after your first post op appointment.**
- Many patients find it easier to sleep in a recliner for a few days after the surgery.

Drain/Incision Care:

- Your drains are held in place with stitches to your skin and should always be supported to avoid pulling on the drain. The easiest method is to safety pin the drain bulb to your abdominal binder or secured with the Velcro strap given with the binder.
- Monitor your drain output daily and record on the sheet given at your pre-operative appointment. Please bring the drain sheet to your post op

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appointments. The “How to care for your drain” pamphlet has more detailed information.

- Drains are generally removed within 7 to 10 days after your surgery.
- After your first post-op appointment, clean your incisions with a Q-tip and warm water, then apply bacitracin. Do this at least twice a day.
- After 1 week of applying bacitracin, please switch to Aquaphor or non-scented moisturizing lotions.
- Avoid sun exposure and wear sunscreen with an SPF of 50+ to the incision if it will be exposed to sun.
- Five weeks after surgery, you may begin applying silicone based scar gel/strips to help aid in the healing.

Diet:

- We recommend a diet consisting of high protein and easily digestible foods (i.e. toast, rice, bananas, eggs, chicken, oatmeal, protein shakes, etc.)
- Do not drink alcohol for a couple weeks after your surgery or while taking narcotic pain medicines
- Limit your salt intake to help decrease swelling.
- Please refer to the “Medications and Foods to Avoid” List provided in your Pre-Surgical email sent

Medication:

- We will prescribe an antibiotic, pain medication, and nausea medication for you. Follow the directions on the bottles for their use.
- The pain medication may make you feel drowsy, so please have someone assist you at home, and do not attempt to drive while you are taking prescription pain medication.
- A stool softener (Colace) is recommended after surgery.
- 5-7 days after surgery, most patients will find that Tylenol will take care of the discomfort.
- Do not use aspirin, ibuprofen (Motrin) or other NSAID medication for 7-10 days after surgery.

Post-Operative Appointments:

- You will normally be seen in the office within one week of your surgery.
- Then at about two, four, six weeks, three months, and six months after surgery to monitor healing.
- Additional appointments may be necessary.

Recommended Supplies:

- Gauze, Q-tips, Bacitracin, and Aquaphor
- Extra Pillows for comfort
- Ice packs

Post-Operative Concerns: Urgent problems after a body lift do not occur frequently. These are the complications that will require a change in your post-operative care:

- **Hematoma** (blood collecting under your incisions) can occur within a few days of your surgery. The warning signs are:
    - Severe pain that does not respond to medication
    - Significant swelling in your abdomen or buttocks
    - Excessive or growing bruising
- **Infection** is rare following body lift. It is normal to have a small amount of drainage from the incisions and around your belly button for a few days. Signs of infection are:
    - Increased temperature
    - Increasing drainage from the incisions
    - Increasing redness around the incisions
- **Leg swelling** (with or without associated pain) may indicate a problem with the vein circulation in your leg(s). If you have a large amount of leg swelling (either one or both legs), or if you experience pain in your legs, contact the office immediately.
- **Breathing problems** after a body lift are rare but can be a serious complication. If you develop any chest and/or back pain or shortness of breath, you must contact our office or be seen in the nearest emergency medical facility without delay.
- **Medication reactions** may occur with the drugs prescribed for you. If you develop a skin rash, itching, vomiting, or diarrhea, stop taking your medication and contact my office.

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