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Surgical Oncology of the Breast

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## PRE-OPERATIVE MASTECTOMY INSTRUCTIONS

- **YOUR PRE-OP APPOINTMENT:** When we schedule your surgery you will be given a pre-op appointment at the hospital. This is so that they can draw labs, do EKGs, etc. before the day of your surgery. At the time of your appointment, the nurses will let you know which of your medications you will need to take the day of your surgery, and which medications you should stop taking. We will let you know when your appointment is.
- **EATING AND DRINKING: DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT THE NIGHT BEFORE YOUR SURGERY.** This includes gum, candy, chewing tobacco, etc. This is so that it is safe for you to go to sleep for surgery. Not adhering to this rule will cause surgery to be rescheduled.
- **MEDICATIONS:** Do not take any aspirin or ibuprofen for at least 7 days prior to surgery. You will need to let the nurse know the day of surgery all medications you have taken. If you take blood thinners, please let us know immediately.
- **THE DAY OF SURGERY:** You will need to arrive approximately 2-3 hours before surgery. We will let you know when to arrive.
- **IF YOU SMOKE:** We **HIGHLY** recommend that you stop smoking! It would be a **GREAT** benefit to your health and healing. If you need to, you can use nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges to help you with this.
- **AS ALWAYS, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, CALL THE OFFICE AT 479-582-1000.**

*Practice Limited to Medical Surgical Diseases of the Breast*

American Society of Breast Disease • Society of Surgical Oncology • Southwest Surgical Congress • American College of Surgeons Oncology Group  
American Society of Breast Surgeons • Clinical Investigator for Breast Cancer Research. NSARP • Britton Foundation

## POST-OPERATIVE MASTECTOMY INSTRUCTIONS

- **COUGHING AND DEEP BREATHING:** It is HIGHLY important that you take time each hour to take deep breaths and cough. This is to prevent pneumonia. Simply take a deep breath, hold a pillow against your chest if you are in pain, and cough. This is even MORE important if you smoke, or have recently quit smoking.
- **INCENTIVE SPIROMETRY:** You will be sent home with a special machine that helps exercise your lungs. It is HIGHLY important that you practice with this machine while you are awake. Practice taking 10 breaths EVERY HOUR, trying to improve each time.
- **BE ACTIVE AT HOME:** It is HIGHLY important that you do not “lay around” all of the time once you go home from the hospital. It is normal to be tired as you recover. It is okay to rest, take naps, etc. However, it is important to walk and be up and around at your home. This is to prevent blood clots.
- **ARM EXERCISES:** As you start feeling better (varies with each person), it is important that you begin regaining movement in the arm on the side of your surgery. You need to do range of motion exercises by placing both hands together at your waist and working to lift your hands above your head with your arms straight. Also, put the arm on the side of your surgery on a wall and work on walking up the wall with your fingers. It will take time to be able to reach all the way over your head- DON'T GIVE UP!
- **STRIPPING YOUR DRAINS:** Strip drains and record the fluid output 3-4 times daily. Use the attached sheet. Place liquid soap on your left fingers. Grasp the drain with the right thumb and index finger near to the skin and with the left hand, pull along the drain. This will prevent clots from stopping up your drain. This needs to be done each time you empty your drain.
- **YOUR FIRST DRESSING CHANGE:** You will be scheduled to come in to the clinic for your first dressing change. Keep your dressing dry and in place until your appointment. If your dressing becomes soiled prior to your appointment, you may change it.
- **BATHING:** You MAY NOT shower until all of your drains are removed. Take only sponge baths until ALL drains are removed. This is to prevent infection.
- **DAILY SKIN CARE:** Clean around the drain and incision with warm soapy water and a washcloth. Pat dry. Cover the drain site with gauze and apply paper tape. Once we remove your original dressing, you may leave your incision open to air (unless we instruct you differently).
- **STAPLES:** Your staples will remain in place at least 2 weeks. We will remove these in the office.
- **DRIVING:** You MAY NOT drive until your staples are removed, and you MAY NOT drive while you are still taking prescription pain medication.