

AFTER ABDOMINOPLASTY INSTRUCTIONS

WHAT TO EXPECT	Arrange for someone to help you get around the house and help with your medication for at least the first twenty-four hours after surgery. You will still be sleepy and groggy when you arrive home from the surgery center, so it is best to have some help. Make sure that you continue to have lots of help at home—this cannot be stressed enough. You will be tempted to get back into your daily routine quickly following surgery, but you will not feel like yourself for most likely 7-10 days.
MEDICATIONS	Take pain medicine and antibiotics as prescribed. (Refer to medication sheet) Remember that it is best to prevent pain rather than treat it once it is out of hand. If you do not need pain medicine, then you may switch to Extra Strength Tylenol. Do NOT take Advil, Aspirin, or Aleve products for 2 weeks following surgery.
ACTIVITY	Take it easy for the week following your surgery. Every hour please get up and walk around and massage your calves to help promote good blood circulation. If you have small children, please arrange for someone else to be in charge of their care for at least one week. Most patients return to work after 1-2 weeks. Sex can be resumed at your discretion after 2 weeks. You may resume light activities such as walking or lifting light objects after 3 weeks. Strenuous physical activity such as cardio routines and free weights can be resumed after 6 weeks.
SLEEP	It is best to sleep in a flexed position. Try sleeping with several pillows under your back and keep your legs slightly bent at the hips to minimize the tension on your incision. A recliner is helpful.
GARMENT	A compression binder will be placed after your surgery along with gauze. You may discard the gauze after the first 48 hours. The hospital provides a wrap style garment which is great to wear while your drain is still in place. You will order the Veronique garment (more like Spanx) as well and switch to this garment once your drain is removed. Please wear the compression garment day AND night for 6 weeks. After the 6 week point, we will have you reduce the amount of hours you wear the garment daily.
DRAINS	Empty your drain and record output daily on the sheet provided. It is helpful to know the amount, color, and consistency of the fluid. Note that the fluid amount will gradually lessen and the color will turn from red to pink to more amber colored as time goes on. It is also common for a little bit of drainage to be present near the tube entry, so you may place gauze around this point to protect your garment. Please bring your drain log to your post-operative appointment. The drain is typically removed within 7-14 days.
BATHING	You may bathe after 24 hours. We prefer that you sponge bathe for the first few days and you may switch to showering once you feel more up to it. Please keep the steri-strip tape that is covering your incision clean and dry. Keep your back facing the water and cover the entry site for your drain. Do NOT soak in the tub.
USING THE RESTROOM	Some patients experience mild discomfort during the first attempt at a bowel movement. Remember that pain medication and anesthesia will slow down intestinal function, so you may not need to go for a few days. Over the counter stool softeners such as Colace, plenty of fiber, and lots of water will help reduce discomfort. Please do not strain!