



The Plastic Surgery Experts

Mark Mandell-Brown, M.D.

Abdominoplasty Post Operative Instructions

Your First 48 Hours:

- **Very Important:** If you have excessive bleeding or pain, call the office at (513) 984-4700 day or night.
- **Your First 24 Hours:** A family member or friend must drive you because you have received anesthesia. Someone should stay overnight with you.
- **Dressings:** Keep your dressing as clean and dry as possible. Do not remove them unless instructed to do so.
- **Activity:** Take it easy and pamper yourself. Try to avoid any straining. You may go to the bathroom, sit and watch TV **but no matter how good you feel, do not clean the house, rearrange the attic, etc.!** We do not want you to bleed and cause any more swelling and bruising than is unavoidable.
- **Patients should do ankle pumps 10 times each ankle 4 times an hour while awake to prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis in legs. Also patients should wear Knee High TED hose postoperatively until you resume normal activity.**
- **Diet:** If you have any postoperative nausea, carbonated sodas and dry crackers may settle the stomach. If nausea is severe, call our office. If you feel normal, start with liquids and bland foods, and if those are well tolerated, progress to a regular diet.
- **Smoking:** Smoking reduces capillary flow in your skin. We advise you not to smoke at all during the first 10 days after surgery.
- **Alcohol:** Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and could increase postoperative bleeding. Please do not drink until you have stopped taking the prescription pain pills, as the combination of pain pills and alcohol can be dangerous.
- **Driving:** Please don't drive for at least 1 week after general anesthesia or intravenous sedation or while taking prescription pain pills.
- **Post Operative Appointments:** It is very important that you follow the schedule of appointments we establish after surgery.

You will need to purchase Knee High TED hose for day of surgery.

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- **Position:** Because abdominoplasty involves removal of the extra abdominal skin and (usually) tightening of the abdominal muscles, you will experience some difficulty standing up straight for a week or two or even longer. During this period, it is necessary to place a pillow or two under your thighs as well as elevate your head with two pillows or you may stay in a recliner. The tightness will gradually disappear as you heal and progressively use your body muscles for the activities of daily living. Please make no special attempts to stretch or pull the abdomen straight during the first 2-3 weeks of healing.
* You must change your position and walk around the house every few hours to reduce the danger of blood clots.
- **Dressings:** You will wear a compression garment after surgery to provide gentle pressure, to give you stability and reduce swelling. If it feels too tight or causes pain, notify our office. We do not want the garment to interfere with circulation to the skin, which could cause blistering or skin loss. You may also remove it temporarily for laundering.
- **Drains:** Dr. Mandell-Brown will place two drains into the groin area at the time of surgery. These drains evacuate the fluid that accumulates after surgery and enables you to heal faster. When the drain is first put in place, the bulb at the end of each tube will be compressed to create gentle suction. As the fluid collects in the bulb it will expand.
- **Drain Care:** Secure the bulb of the drain to your clothing or the abdominal garment with a safety pin. Whenever the bulb fills or expands 25-50%, empty the bulb by opening the plug at the top and pouring the contents into a medicine cup. Do not attempt to remove the bulb from the tubing. Squeeze the bulb to recompress it, and put the plug back into the hole at the top in order to maintain the vacuum, if the bulb fills rapidly after emptying it or you need to empty it more than four times a day, please call us at (513)984-4700. Dr. Mandell-Brown or a nurse will remove the drains 5-10 days after surgery, when the fluid begins to turn a clear straw color and/or the amount of drainage diminishes. You may shower the day after your drains are removed.
- **Activities:** You will experience some pain for 10-20 days and will not feel like resuming sporting or heavy exercise for at least 6 weeks. After the first 2 weeks, you may resume moderate walks for as long as is tolerable. Too much initial activity can prolong swelling.
- **Sutures:** The sutures around the belly button 7-10 days after surgery and the remaining clips or sutures in approximately 14 days after surgery. Once sutures are removed, clean with Peroxide and Q-tip, then apply antibiotic ointment (4) times a day.
- **Exposure to Sunlight:** We recommend that you protect your scars from the sun for a year after surgery. Even through a bathing suit, a good deal of sunlight can reach the skin and cause damage. Wear a sunscreen with skin-protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 when out in sunny weather.

Longer Term Postoperative Instructions

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- **Activity/Sports:** We want you to avoid straining or any aerobic activity for at least 3 weeks after surgery. This is to avoid bleeding, bruising, and swelling. Do not resume strenuous exercise for 6 weeks. Dr. Mandell-Brown will give you clearance to increase your activities according to the progress of your recovery.
- **Driving:** You may resume driving when you feel you are able, but wait at least 2 days after surgery. Keep in mind that you must have full use of your reflexes. If pain will inhibit them, don't drive. In addition prescription pain medicine must be discontinued before you should drive.
- **Sexual Activity: Sexual Activity:** You may enjoy sexual activity as your body allows with the following restriction: Please reread activity/sports above and apply the same concept to sexual activity.
- **Sun Exposure:** If fresh scars are exposed to the sun, they will tend to become darker and take longer to fade. Sunscreen can help. Take extra care and precautions if the area operated on is slightly numb-you might not feel sunburn developing.
- **Work:** Follow whatever plan you and Dr. Mandell-Brown have agreed upon.

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