

Post Op Guidelines

after your surgery



LA

BREAST & BODY

Cosmetic and Restorative Surgery

What new surgical wounds look like

Healthy new surgical wounds are characterized by:

- mild swelling and firmness
- mild redness along wound edge not more than ½ inch wide
- slight oozing of fluid and/or blood from the wound, easily controlled with small gauze or Band-Aid
- crusting of wound edges
- bruising, which may increase over several days, but not associated with increased swelling
- numbness or decreased sensation on and surrounding surgical site
- low grade fever of 99-100 °F (this is usually due to insufficient deep breathing and coughing) .

How to take care of a new wound after surgery

- Change outside gauze dressings whenever soiled, replace dressings and ointment daily with showering at incisions and drain sites
- Follow drain care instructions carefully, if you have drains in place.
- Wear the surgical bra provided for you as much as possible (day and night) If the surgical bra is too restrictive or too tight, use a bra of your choice with good support without underwires. A front closing sports bra works well. The pressure from the bra will support the breast area, minimize swelling, and limit the chances of bleeding around the implant.

Call the surgical team immediately for any of the following:

- temperature 101 °F (38.5 °C) or more
- presence of shaking chills
- presence of increasing swelling, tightness, or if dressing becomes restrictive
- continuous oozing of fluid from surgical site which is not controlled by a simple dressing

- persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- you are worried that there may be a problem

Pain and medication

- Take prescribed pain medications only as needed. Follow the instructions given to you by your doctor or pharmacist. Your postoperative pain should lessen each day although occasional worsening can be expected as you increase your activity. Call the your plastic surgeon immediately if your pain seems to be worsening to the point that you need increasing amounts of pain medication. This may be the first sign of an infection
- If you are taking antibiotics, be sure to take the medication as directed by your plastic surgeon and complete the entire course of treatment. This medication has been prescribed to limit the chances of infection.
- If you are taking pain medications containing narcotics (Norco, hydrocodone, oxycodone, dilaudid, morphine, tramadol), do not drive. **This is state law!**

Bathing

- You may shower daily, 48 hours from surgery, unless you have been instructed otherwise. Showers are helpful in keeping wounds clean. If you are taking pain medication, have someone help you in the shower. Follow drain care instructions carefully.
- Gently wash incision (s) with mild soap and water, pad dry

Activity

let pain be your guide: if it hurts, don't do it.

- Avoid heavy pushing or pulling for 6 weeks after surgery
- Avoid lifting items over 5 pounds for six weeks
- Limit movement of affected arm to 90 degrees forward and sideways
- Get adequate rest and sleep
- Eat a balanced diet to promote wound healing
- Avoid strenuous activity involving the surgical side(s) for 6 weeks. Excessive activity may prolong the normal period of time the wound(s) will drain
- **Do not drive** until you have been cleared by your surgical team

Any non urgent symptoms, questions, problems please text or call 626 888 9728.

Medical emergencies such as difficulty breathing, chest pains, bleeding, fever over 101.5 or any symptoms needing immediate attention, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Post-Operative Garment Instructions

Following your surgery, wearing the appropriate post-operative garments is an important part of your recovery. These garments help reduce swelling, protect surgical sites, support healing, and improve overall comfort.

Your specific garment instructions will depend on the type of procedure you had. Always follow the guidance provided by Dr. Wai-Yee Li and our clinical team.

Immediately After Surgery

When you wake up from surgery, you will already be placed in the appropriate post-surgical garment by our team.

- Do not remove or change this garment unless instructed
- Some swelling, tightness, or pressure is normal in the early post-operative period
- Keep garments clean and dry
- Breast Surgery (Breast Augmentation & Breast Reconstruction)
- After breast surgery, you will wear a post-surgical bra as directed by Dr. Li
- Transition to your own front-closing sports bra once cleared by Dr. Li
- Wear the bra continuously (day and night) unless instructed otherwise
- Avoid underwire bras until you are specifically told they are safe to resume
- The bra should feel supportive but not overly tight or painful
- Several of our patients have highly recommended this bra: <https://a.co/d/5olkTd7>

Aesthetic Flat Closure

Patients who have undergone aesthetic flat closure will typically wear a breast binder after surgery.

- The binder provides gentle compression to reduce swelling and support healing
- Dr. Li will advise how long to wear the binder and when it may be adjusted or discontinued
- Notify our office if the binder feels excessively tight, painful, or causes skin irritation

Surgical Drains & Drain Garments

If you have surgical drains, proper drain management is essential to prevent complications.

- Always secure drains using a drain management garment or apron.
- Avoid letting drains hang freely or pull on the skin.

- Empty and record drain output as instructed.
- Contact our office if a drain becomes dislodged, stops draining suddenly, or shows signs of infection.

Dr. Li has created a patient education video reviewing drain garments and safe drain care: https://youtu.be/CeBBWs_j__c

Dr. Li designed her own Seecret® Drain Apron, which comfortably holds up to six surgical drains. It has been used by hundreds of patients over the past six years, including during her time at City of Hope, and is highly recommended in her practice.

Patients can purchase the Seecret® Drain Apron through her garment company, Surgical SECRETS: <https://surgicalsecrets.com/products/seecret-apron>

How Long Will I Need to Wear My Garments?

The length of time you will need to wear post-operative garments varies depending on your procedure and your individual healing.

- Some garments are worn for several weeks.
- Others may be discontinued earlier or transitioned to lighter support.
- Dr. Li will guide you at each follow-up visit.

When to Contact Our Office

Please contact our office if you experience:

- Increasing pain or pressure related to your garment
- Skin irritation, blistering, or wounds under the garment
- Sudden swelling, redness, or drainage
- Accidental drain removal or concerns about drain function

Final Notes

Proper use of post-operative garments plays a key role in a smooth recovery and optimal surgical outcomes. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to our team—your safety and comfort are our priority.