



FADI CONSTANTINE M.D.  
AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY

## ADBOMINOPLASTY (Tummy Tuck) AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET OUT OF BED EARLY AND OFTEN AFTER YOUR SURGERY (WITH ASSISTANCE) TO PREVENT POSTOPERATIVE PROBLEMS. PLEASE TAKE 15-20 DEEP BREATHS PER HOUR FREQUENTLY TO KEEP YOUR LUNGS CLEAR.
- It is important to walk slightly “stooped over” (bent at knees and hips with back straight) for about the first 10-14 days to release tension on the suture line. Sleep with your hips in a flexed position and pillows under your knees with your head slightly elevated about 30 degrees for the first two weeks following surgery.
- Take your pain pills and muscle relaxer as directed for the first 1-2 weeks following surgery. Refer to our pain management information sheet located on our website for more detailed instructions on how to take your pain medications.
- After your surgery, start with a liquid diet and then progress to a soft diet. Limit spicy foods which cause gas or bloating. Increase protein to ensure healing. Though it is impossible to get rid of gas entirely, there are strategies to reduce it. Eat and drink slowly, chew thoroughly and cut down on carbonated drinks. Avoid sugar-free gums and sugar-free candies that contain sorbitol or zylitol – both sweeteners are poorly digested. If gas is painful and persistent, call our office. People are all different so you will need to use your judgment on food choices.
- Keep your drainage bulbs collapsed and record time and amounts of drainage 2-3x a day over a 24-hour period for each drain. All patients heal differently according to many factors. Dr. Constantine will make the decision regarding drain removal and necessity of office visits. (Generally, the drains are removed within the first 7-10 days following your surgery, but only if they are ready to be pulled which will be determined by our staff and Dr. Constantine). **YOU MUST BRING YOUR DRAIN LOG TO YOUR POST OP APPT IN ORDER FOR YOUR DRAINS TO BE REMOVED.**
- You may shower 48 hours after surgery as your incision site will have a clear Dermabond glue/tape on it to make it waterproof (unless you reported an allergy to adhesive in which case you may have steri strips and will need to sponge bathe for the first two weeks given steri strips are not water proof). Make sure someone is with you at your first shower! The Dermabond glue/tape is typically removed around 2-3 weeks following surgery. Once this is removed and your incision no longer has any scabbing, you can apply silicone gel or strips to your incision site to maximize wound healing and the appearance of your scar.
- **Wear a binder continuously for the first two weeks following surgery. This binder should be worn 24/7** as it is important in reducing any fluid buildup/swelling in your abdomen following surgery. You can take it off to shower after 2 days. If needed, you can take a few 30-minute breaks from wearing it throughout the day, but it is important to try and wear this 24/7 as much as possible for at least the first 2-3 weeks. After your drains are removed, you should continue to wear your abdominal binder 24/7 for at least one more week to ensure no further fluid build up.
- You may resume sexual activity in 4 weeks. For the first 10 days following surgery, raising your blood pressure (heart rate) will cause bleeding. Abdominal stress on your muscles will stretch or break the sutures if you exercise before 4 weeks. At four weeks you should consider passive or less vigorous sexual activity that will not cause abdominal movement.
- Please do not drive for 7-10 days and not until you are off all narcotics and muscle relaxers for at least 24 hours!
- **Do not lift anything heavier than 10-15 lbs for the first 6 weeks.** It is good to walk for 15-20 minutes a few times a day starting 48 hours after your surgery. Make sure to use assistance when walking for the first few days following surgery and while you are taking narcotics! **DO NOT RUN,**

LIFT ANYTHING >10 LBS, PLAY TENNIS, GOLF, DO PILATES/EXERCISE CLASSES, BIKE OR ANY OTHER STRENUOUS ACTIVITY FOR THE FIRST 6 WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY. After the first 4 weeks, you may start to do light to moderate exercises such as light jogging and arm workouts using 1-5 lbs weights. Try to keep your heart rate under 100 bpm for the first 6 weeks following surgery unless otherwise instructed by Dr. Constantine. At around 6 weeks, you may go back to resuming your normal activities without restrictions once you have been cleared by Dr. Constantine.

- Do NOT take aspirin or products containing aspirin for the first 3 weeks after surgery. You may take Ibuprofen (Advil) as needed anytime following surgery.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Moderate swelling of your abdomen is to be expected. You may find that your clothes may not fit as easily as before. Be patient. The swelling will gradually subside and you will be back to normal in 3 to 6 months.
2. Because of the removal of tissue from your abdomen, there is a certain amount of tightness that is to be expected. This will slowly relax within 6 months.
3. If you notice some vaginal burning and itching (vaginitis/yeast infection) as a result of the antibiotic used during and after surgery, our office or your family physician can prescribe Diflucan.
4. Infrequently after surgery, you may have fluid in the abdomen after the drains are removed. If this happens, you will notice a fullness or sloshy feeling in your abdomen. Please contact our office so we can aspirate it easily in the office.
5. It is important to be seen by Dr. Constantine at 1-2 weeks post op, 6 weeks, 6 months, and 1 year post-op so that we can monitor your healing/progress and address any other concerns or questions you may have.
6. Some suggestions to ease abdominal discomfort or indigestion after surgery:
  - Drink a lot of water – 8 glasses a day!
  - Drink warm liquids (tea or coffee)
  - Prune juice mixed with 7-Up (half and half) for mild constipation
  - If severely constipated use Miralax first as it is a mild but effective laxative, Phillips Milk of Magnesia, Colace stool softeners, and fleet enemas (regular or oil retention) as a last resort.
  - Walking helps the circulation in legs and bowels.

## IMPORTANT

- **If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call our office.**
- **If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 100 degrees), redness and/or increased pain at surgical incision sites, please call Dr. Constantine.**
- **If you have major dental work or major surgery, please notify Dr. Constantine so he can prescribe a pre-operative medication to protect your implants from possible infection.**

If you need immediate care, please call Dr. Constantine's office anytime. There is no such thing as a minor question. I would rather you call me than wonder and not do the right thing, so please call my office number 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week and you will be connected either directly to me or to my staff so that we can address your concerns as quickly as possible.

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