

INSTRUCTIONS AFTER ABDOMINOPLASTY

After surgery

- Immediately after surgery, you will find several pillows under your knees. This is to prevent too much tension on the abdominal sutureline. Please make certain you keep the pillows in place.
- You will have drains, usually two, to drain away any oozing and tissue fluid so it does not collect under the skin. These will generally stay for 2 days to 2 weeks and will be removed on Dr. Kohout's instructions when the drainage is minimal.
- Your pain relief will include an intravenous drip or oral tablets of strong painkillers
- To minimise the risks of blood clots and potentially fatal complications, it is important that you get up and out of bed as soon as possible. Ideally, this should be the day after surgery. You will find you will walk "bent over" until straightening becomes comfortable, usually 5-7 days.
- To minimise the risks of Lung collapse and pneumonia, you will be seen by a physiotherapist to encourage deep breathing.
- Keep the dressings, drains and any garments undisturbed. They will be looked after by the nurses according to Dr. Kohout's instructions.
- You will be in hospital around 2-4 days. You may have compression stockings or even inflatable calf compressors until you are walking and injections of anticoagulant medication will be administered twice a day to minimise the risk of blood clots.
- You are encouraged to take deep breaths regularly and to move your legs gently while confined in bed.
- **For 24 hours following general anaesthetic:**
DO NOT drive or operate machinery, DO NOT sign any legal documents, DO NOT take on any major responsibilities and DO NOT drink alcohol

At home till the first post-operative visit (5-10 days)

- Keep mobile: move around the house. Get up at least every hour to have a short walk. Do not stay in bed.
- You can eat and drink as normal if you can tolerate it (take care not to get intoxicated).
- **Do not smoke for at least 4 weeks after surgery.**
- You can shower as normal, taking care to pat the incisions rather than rubbing them.
- Do not do any strenuous activity for at least 4 weeks after surgery: just walking around the house. No lifting, no moving furniture, no housework
- No driving for 10 days.

Pain Relief

- You will have strong medications to take home from the hospital: Take these as prescribed.
- Your strong, narcotic-type pain relief will be prescribed for up to 5 days after surgery.
- After this time, you will transition to safer medications such as Panadol, Nurofen or similar.

Wound care

- You will be able to shower but take care not to soak the wound. If the dressings get wet, gently pat dry these after showering. You may also use a hair dryer to dry your dressings if necessary.
- Keep dressings undisturbed. The bellybutton dressings may be changed 2-7 days after surgery and specific instructions will be issued as to the timing.
- The elastic binder, if present, should stay in place for about 4 weeks. You can remove it to shower or to wash it.
- Do not remove your sutures before your surgeon's instructions. There are usually sutures around the bellybutton and these will be removed on your postoperative visit about 6-8 days after the operation.
- The stitches in the main, lower abdominal wound, are self-dissolving and don't need to be removed.

- Swelling and numbness of the skin of the lower abdomen may be noted for up to 12 months

Physical activity and Exercise

- Walk as often as possible as this minimises the risk of clots forming in your leg veins. But do not overdo things. It is best to take frequent, short walks than long, infrequent ones.
- Do not do any strenuous activity for at least 4 weeks after surgery: just walking around the house. No lifting, no moving furniture, no housework.
- Do not perform any manual labour for at least 4 weeks, ie. heavy lifting, strenuous activity or sport.
- Most patients are able to return to low-activity, office-type work around 10-14 days after surgery.
- Increase your exercise levels slowly. Gym work, such as gym weights, exercise bike, treadmill, running or swimming should be avoided for 6 weeks.
- More intense exercise, particularly abdominal “scrunches” and “sit-ups” and any form of contact/collision sport should be postponed for at least 12 weeks.

Notify Dr. Kohout on 0412 587 184 if there are any problems such as excessive bleeding, increased pain or swelling.

Your Post-operative appointment In Dr. Kohout’s office will be on:

