



MOUNT AUBURN HOSPITAL

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www.massplasticsurgeons.com



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL

LIPOSUCTION POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- In the week before your operation:
 - Consider eating pineapple, it may help reduce bruising
 - Consider supplementing with Arnica montana, it may help reduce bruising
 - Complete household chores and prepare meals for the first few days of postoperative recovery
 - Follow preoperative instructions with eating, drinking, and medications
 - Order two compression garments specific to your size and planned areas of liposuction. The garments do not need to be expensive. Dr. Taylor and Dr. Sullivan can make some recommendations of garments that can be ordered from Amazon or online.
- **Postoperatively, get out of bed and walk (with assistance) every few hours after your operation to decrease the chance of postoperative problems such as blood clots.**
- Practice 15-20 deep breaths every hour to keep your lungs open.
- After surgery, it is important for you to have someone available to stay with you for the first 24-48 hours, as you may feel drowsy. You may require help the first few times you get out of bed.
- Take your medications as directed to manage your discomfort and symptoms.
 - Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 1000 mg every 8 hours, space doses 4 hours after Ibuprofen so one or the other is taken every 4 hours
 - Ibuprofen (Motrin) 800 mg every 8 hours, space doses 4 hours after Acetaminophen so one or the other is taken every 4 hours
 - Gabapentin 300 mg every 8 hours for 7 days
 - Vitamin C 500 mg daily for 50 days
 - Oxycodone 5 mg – 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed for pain, though many patients may not need it
 - Colace 100 mg twice daily to prevent constipation, it is important to have a bowel movement each day
 - Zofran 8 mg every 8 hours if needed for nausea
 - Scopolamine patch will be placed behind the ear on the day of surgery and can stay for 3 days

Please contact Dr. Helena O. B. Taylor or Dr. Stephen R. Sullivan for additional information on plastic surgery.

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- Eat a light diet for 2-3 days and avoid spicy food. Some suggestions to ease abdominal discomfort or indigestion after surgery:
 - Drink water or warm liquids
 - Prune juice to prevent constipation
- You may shower or sponge bath the day after the operation with assistance.
- Wear the compression garment continuously for 3 weeks after surgery, then for 12 hours of each day for an additional 3 weeks, and thereafter as needed for comfort. You can take it off to shower. The first time you remove the garment, please have someone help you. If you feel dizzy or light headed, sit down or lie down. The garment helps control swelling and fluid build-up.
- Most wounds will be closed with absorbable sutures that are buried and skin glue. The skin glue forms a barrier to water. Please do not remove the glue, it will fall off on its own after a few weeks.
- Infection is uncommon, though please call Dr. Taylor or Dr. Sullivan immediately at any sign of infection which would be signaled by fever, increased pain, new redness or swelling in the abdominal area.

ACTIVITY

- For the first few days following surgery, raising your blood pressure and heart rate can cause bleeding. Stress on your muscles near areas of liposuction or vigorous exercise could cause bleeding and swelling. We recommend walking 15 minutes 2 to 3 times per day and gradually increasing activity tailored to your recovery.
- Please do not drive until turning the steering wheel can be done safely and without pain (usually 5 to 7 days). Do not drive while taking pain medications such as oxycodone.

GENERAL OUTCOMES

- Moderate swelling and bruising is to be expected. Bruising may last for a few weeks and will move down your body due to gravity.
- You may find that your clothes are tight and may not fit as easily for at least 6 weeks after the operation. A feeling of tightness is also to be expected. Please be patient, the swelling and feeling of tightness will gradually subside over the following months.
- You may notice that you actually gain weight following liposuction. This is because the body retains fluid with swelling in response to the surgery. The swelling may persist for 6 weeks or more before it slowly decreases. A change in body contour and the way clothes fit is the goal of the operation, rather than a change or decrease in weight.

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- Tingling, itching, and numbness are all normal after liposuction. These are signs of healing and will resolve. Sensation usually returns gradually and slowly over weeks to months. Please be patient and avoid resting against hot surfaces, which can injure or burn the skin.
- Massage to the areas of liposuction can help increase circulation and soften firm areas under the skin. Please wait at least 3 to 4 weeks after surgery to start massage to avoid increased swelling.
- Scars take one full year to mature. Although small, you may notice that liposuction port sites become red, raised and firm for several weeks to months before becoming soft, flat and pale. Avoid Vitamin E as it can irritate the scar. Mederma has no proven benefit and is not worth the expense. Silicone cream or skin moisturizer with sunscreen and gentle massage may be helpful.

It is important to be seen by Dr. Taylor or Dr. Sullivan after your operation. They will see you in follow-up appointments at 5 to 7 days, 3 to 6 months, and 1 year or as often as needed post-op. Call Taylor and Sullivan Plastic Surgery to schedule your appointments at (617) 492-0620 between the hours of 8:30 – 5:00 or visit our webpage at www.massplasticsurgeons.com. We are always available for postoperative concerns or emergencies and can be reached through our paging service 24 hours per day at (617) 492-0620.

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