

## **Gynecomastia Patient Care Instructions**

### ***General Information***

Reduction of the male breast is carried out for gynecomastia. Gynecomastia is a pathologic condition in which bilateral or unilateral enlargement of the male breast occurs. Gynecomastia occurs primarily after 40 years of age or during puberty and is usually related to alterations in the normal hormonal balance. Subareolar tissue is removed, followed by reconstruction of the resultant defect. Liposuction-assisted procedures are performed to reduce breast tissue if needed.

### ***Pre-Operative Guidelines***

Smoking should be stopped a minimum of 4 weeks prior to surgery. Smoking should be avoided for at least 4 weeks after surgery as well. Smoking can greatly interfere with healing and lead to postoperative complications.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery. This includes no water, gum or hard candy. Blood pressure and/or heart medications can be taken with a sip of water as directed by your prescribing physician.

If you take medication for diabetes, then confirm with your prescribing physician how to manage these medications prior to surgery.

If you are prone to nausea or motion sickness let your anesthesiologist know on the day of surgery. Medications can be started prior to surgery or during surgery to help improve your postoperative experience.

### ***Post-Operative Care***

You will be prescribed medications after surgery. Pain medication should be taken as prescribed in order to keep you comfortable enough to keep moving. Often this medication is necessary for the first two days and then on an as needed basis. Do not drink alcohol with this medication, and do not take it on an empty stomach. Antibiotics (if prescribed) should be taken after surgery until your drains are removed.

Ibuprofen (Motrin) can be started the day after surgery.

Take a stool softener/laxative, such as Colace, Biscodyl, or Milk of Magnesia, until bowels begin to function normally after surgery. A combination of anesthesia and pain medication usually makes this necessary for a few days.

Do not smoke or be around smoking as even secondhand smoke delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

You may resume a normal diet after surgery. Do follow a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids.

You will be placed into an ace or binder, which should be worn as much as tolerated. You can expect some minor swelling, numbness, and bruising of the chest. Wearing an ace wrap or binder, even at night, may help ease any discomfort, but is not required. Do not wear anything that is tight or uncomfortable. A garment that leaves marks on the skin is too tight. DO NOT use a hot water bottle or electric heating pad on your chest until normal sensation returns as the risk for burns with the electric pad is substantially increased.

### ***Activity Restrictions***

Walking is encouraged shortly after the operation and can be increased over the first 2 weeks. Light cardiovascular exercise can be gradually resumed after 4 weeks with all activities to be resumed at 6 weeks.

For the first 24 hours, keep your arm movements to a minimum. Your arms should not be used to support your body or to lift heavy things. Raising your arms to 90 degrees is acceptable.

Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs. for 4 weeks.

Do not drive for approximately 7 days or until you are no longer taking oral pain medications.

Do not run, lift weights, play tennis or golf for 6 weeks after surgery.

Heavy lifting/stretching (Yoga) can be resumed after 6 weeks.

### ***Incision care***

You may have skin glue over your incisions after surgery that are waterproof. You may or may not additionally have two drain tubes (one on each side) covered with a plastic dressing. This dressing can be changed if needed. Aquaguard waterproof dressings can be purchased over the counter and are good dressings to replace them with. You can shower beginning 24 hours after surgery if you have skin glue for dressing. **Do not bathe or soak in a tub.** You may cleanse the incisions, but please keep the drain sites dry. You may re-enforce the drain dressings with aquaguard over the counter dressings if needed.

If you have tape placed over your incisions do not shower until 48 hours after surgery. Additionally, you will have fluffy gauze placed over your tapes. On the day you shower you may discard the gauze dressing but leave the tapes in place and they will begin to lift on their own. Otherwise follow directions as noted above.

Dressings are to remain in place until seen in clinic.

### ***Expectations after Surgery for Gynecomastia***

It is common to have discomfort of the chest and mild burning around the areola. It will improve shortly after surgery.

You expect some slight bloody oozing from the suture lines and swelling of the incisions. It is not uncommon for some saturation of the dressings to occur. Gauze may be applied if it is bothersome. However, you should call the clinic if you have continuous bleeding, significantly more swelling on one breast, or any severe pain associated with swelling.

Tightness of the chest is a normal feeling after this surgery. This may worsen over the first 2 days but will relax with time.

There may be a feeling of numbness of the chest that will subside with time.

### ***When to Call the Office***

If you have increased swelling and bruising of one breast significantly more than the other. Remove the bra to make this determination. This may represent a hematoma (a collection of blood) or a seroma (collection of clear fluid).

If you have swelling or redness around the incision.

If you have severe pain not relieved by pain medication.

If you have any side effects from medication: rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.

If you have fever over 101.

If you have yellow or green drainage from an incision or notice foul odor.

For medical questions please call 817-702-8300 or send a message via mychart.

### ***Follow-up Care and Appointments***

You will be seen approximately 1 week after your surgery. If for some reason you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call 817-702-8300.