

SABRINA A. LAHIRI, M. D.
PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

ABDOMINOPLASTY
(TUMMY TUCK)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Have someone drive you home after surgery and help you at home for 1-2 days.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Follow balanced diet.
- Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
- Take pain medication as prescribed. Do not take aspirin or any products containing aspirin.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
- Even when not taking pain medications, no alcohol for 3 weeks as it causes fluid retention.
- If you are taking vitamins with iron, resume these as tolerated.
- Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

ACTIVITIES

- Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots.
- Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications (narcotics).
- Do not drive until you have full range of motion with your arms.
- No lifting greater than 5 lbs. for 6 weeks.
- Resume sexual activity as comfort permits, usually 2-3 weeks postoperatively.
- Avoid straining of abdominal muscles. Strenuous exercise and activities are restricted for 6 weeks.
- Return to work in 2-4 weeks.

INCISION CARE

- You may shower 48 hours after removal of the drainage tubes.
- Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months.
- Always use a strong sunblock, if sun exposure is unavoidable (SPF 30 or greater).
- Keep steri-strips on; replace if they come off.
- Keep incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection.
- No tub soaking while sutures or drains are in place.
- May wear soft support underpants for comfort; may pad incision with dressings for comfort.
- Sleep with pillow under knees and head elevated on 2 pillows.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- You may experience temporary pain, soreness, numbness of abdominal skin, incision discomfort.
- Maximum discomfort will occur the first few days.
- You will have bruising and swelling of the abdomen. The majority of bruising and swelling will subside in 6-8 weeks.
- You may feel tired for several weeks or months.

APPEARANCE

- Flatter, firmer abdomen with narrower waistline.
- You will walk slightly bent forward and gradually return to normal posture over next 3 weeks.
- Scars will be reddened for 6 months. After that, they will fade and soften.
- The scar will extend from near one hipbone to the other, low on the abdomen.

FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Abdominal drains removed when less than 20 ml for 24 hours
- Surface stitches removed in 7-10 days if necessary
- A support garment may replace dressing on incision.

WHEN TO CALL

- If you have increased swelling or bruising
- If swelling and redness persist after a few days.
- If you have increased redness along the incision.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have any side effects to medications; such as rash, nausea, headache, vomiting.
- If you have an oral temperature over 100.4 degrees.
- If you have any yellowish or greenish drainage from the incisions or notice a foul odor.
- If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
- If you have loss of feeling or motion.

For medical questions, please call:

- **281-419-1123, Monday-Friday, 24 hours**