

POSTOPERATIVE CARE-OUTPATIENT SURGERY BRACHIOPLASTY

- **Your first 24 hours**

Someone should stay overnight with you.

- **Dressings**

The dressing placed at the time of surgery usually stay in place for several days. We will change them during your follow up appointment in the office.

- **Showering and Bathing**

Once your dressings are removed, you may bathe or shower.

- **Activity**

Use your arms carefully and gently until you are given the clearance for full activities. This will typically occur 3-4 weeks later.

- **Swelling**

Normal postoperative swelling always occurs and will take several months to disappear completely.

- **Driving**

You can probably drive as soon as you are comfortable. Let your body "tell" you when you are ready.

- **Exercise**

You may take gentle walks within a few days. Do not return to aerobic exercise for approximately 6 weeks. Dr. Schantz will give you clearance to increase your activities according to the progress of your recovery.

- **Sexual Activity**

You may enjoy sexual activity as your body allows with certain restrictions. (Refer to back to activity)

- **Sun Exposure**

If fresh scars are exposed to the sun, they will tend to become darker and take longer to fade. Sunscreen can help. Take extra care and precautions if the area operated on is slightly numb---you might not "feel" sunburn developing!

- **Scars**

Initially, the scars will appear red or dark pink, and they will slowly fade over a period of months to a year or more.

- **Diet**

If you have any postoperative nausea, carbonated sodas and dry crackers may settle the stomach. If nausea is severe, let us know as soon as possible. If you feel normal, start with liquids and bland foods, and if those are well tolerated, progress to a regular diet.

- **Smoking**

Smoking reduces capillary flow in your skin. We advise you not to smoke at all for 2 weeks before surgery and 2 weeks after surgery.

- **Alcohol**

Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and could increase postoperative bleeding. Please do not drink until you have stopped taking the prescription pain pills, as the combination of pain pills and alcohol can be dangerous.

- **Returning to Work**

The average person usually returns to work or to a social schedule in 2-3 weeks. However, there is considerable variation in healing and occasionally a full month is required.

- **Post Operative Appointments**

It is very important that you follow the schedule of appointments we establish after surgery.

- **Finally**

If you have excessive bleeding or pain, call the office at 859-254-5665, day or night.