

## ANDREA MARTIN, MD

### AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS for LIPOSUCTION

#### MEDICATIONS

- You may be prescribed narcotic pain medication, which you should take as directed and as needed for pain. Do not exceed the prescribed amount, unless instructed by your surgeon.
- Take over-the-counter Tylenol (acetaminophen) on a scheduled basis (Ex.: 650mg every 4 hours, or 1000mg every 6 hours) starting on your day of surgery. *If you have liver problems, do not take acetaminophen, unless you have discussed this with your doctor.*  
DO NOT TAKE MORE THAN 4000 mg of acetaminophen per a day.  
Your narcotic medication may also contain acetaminophen, so you need to be aware of your total dose from all medications you are using.
- Ibuprofen (ie. Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) may be started the same day as your surgery and may be used together with your narcotic pain medications and/or with acetaminophen. *However, do not use ibuprofen or naproxen if you have had problems with stomach ulcers, kidney problems or if you have been told by a doctor not to use nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).*
- Purchase an over-the-counter stool softener (Metamucil, Colace) while taking narcotic pain medication. This helps avoid constipation.
- You may resume taking your routine medications, unless your physician instructs you differently.

#### DIET

- You should gradually resume your normal diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids/ water (eight 8-ounce glasses a day).
- Do NOT drink alcohol for 24 to 48 hours after surgery, or while taking narcotics.

#### COMPRESSION GARMENTS

- If you have a tight elastic compression garment on, do not remove it until you follow up with your surgeon. You may shower while wearing it, then let it air dry or use a hand-held hair blow drier. Your surgeon may instruct you to remove the garment prior to showering.
- Wear your compression garment for 4 weeks, and as needed for comfort after that.
- You may remove the compression garment to shower and to wash the garment as needed. You should replace the garment immediately.
- You will need help removing and replacing the garment the first few times. You may experience some dizziness or feel lightheaded when taking off the garment. Take the garment off slowly and while sitting down.
- While the garment should be snug, it should not be so tight that it makes it difficult for you to breathe.
- If the garment irritates your skin, you may find it more comfortable to wear a light T-shirt under the binder, or pad the irritated areas with something *clean* and soft (such as fuzzy socks).

#### ACTIVITY

- **IMPORTANT:** To decrease the risk of blood clots after surgery, you should walk regularly, and flex your calf muscles. Except during your normal sleeping time, get up and walk around for at least 5 minutes every hour.
- **SHOWER:** You may shower 1 to 2 days after surgery. Do **NOT** soak, take a tub bath, swim, or whirlpool for 4 weeks, or if there are any openings in the incision.

- If you have paper tape or Steri-Strips over the incisions, do NOT remove them. You may still shower with them. Gently pat them dry and let your skin air dry before redressing. The tape/Steri-Strips will be removed in the office.
- **SLEEPING:** Sleep in a comfortable position.
- For the first few times, you may need assistance getting into and out of the bed/chair.
- You are encouraged to **begin walking the evening of surgery**. While sitting, alternate moving your ankle up & down several times each hour to help with circulation (flexing your calf muscles).
- **DRIVING:** You may begin driving 5 to 7 days after surgery; longer if you do not feel comfortable with your reflexes behind the wheel. Do not drive while taking narcotic medications.
- **CAUTION:** Do **NOT** do activities that bring your arms above your head for 1 week (examples: lifting items to shelves or bringing arms above head to put on a shirt).
- Do **NOT** push, pull, or lift anything heavier than 10 pounds (about the weight of a gallon of milk) for 2 weeks.
- Do **NOT** do any strenuous activity or exercise/ activities (running, weight lifting, aerobics, vacuuming) for 2 weeks. After you start exercising, go slowly over 1 to 2 weeks until you are comfortable with more strenuous exercises.
- Do **NOT** engage in any sexual activity for 2 weeks; resume when completely comfortable.
- Do **NOT** drive or handle heavy machinery while taking narcotic pain medication or muscle relaxant medications.
- Do **NOT** cross your legs or sit for more than one (1) hour in the same position while awake.
- Do **NOT** fly for 10 days, if possible.

#### **WHAT TO EXPECT**

- Some pain and discomfort for 3 to 4 weeks, although it should gradually get better after the first 2 to 3 days.
- You will notice drainage from the incision sites on the first 1 to 2 days. This is normal. You may cover with gauze and secure with paper tape.
- If there are any non-absorbable sutures, they will be removed in 1 to 2 weeks after your surgery.
- Do not be overly concerned if you notice decreased sensation (numbness, tingling) in the areas treated with liposuction. This is normal. It may take months for full sensation to return.
- The treated areas will feel swollen and bruised, and you may feel some burning. The bruises may get worse for 1 to 2 days and last for several weeks. The swelling may last for 3 to 6 months. This is **NORMAL**. Please be patient as it takes 6-12 months, or more, to see your final results.

#### **SCAR MANAGEMENT**

See Incision and Scar Care instructions

#### **WHEN TO CALL DR. GUTOWSKI or DR. MARTIN:**

- Fever over 100.5° F for 2 readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Marked increase in redness, swelling, or pain around incision.
- Any excessive bleeding or drainage from your incisions.
- Pain that is not relieved by prescription medication.
- Persistent problems with nausea or vomiting
- **CHEST PAIN or TROUBLE BREATHING: CALL 911 or go to an Emergency Room**