

## PREPARATIONS FOR BREAST RECONSTRUCTION SURGERY

**Date:**

**Place:**

**Arrival Time:**

### **TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOUR SURGERY:**

Some medications can interfere with anesthesia and cause undesirable side effects that could affect your surgery. Please read over the enclosed medication information list and let us know if you are taking any of them. **Aspirin-containing products or Ibuprofen should not be taken 2 weeks before or after your surgery.** Tylenol is an acceptable medicine to take for any aches or pains prior to your surgery.

If you develop a cold, facial sore or any illnesses prior to surgery, please notify us.

Please inform my office of any homeopathic remedies you are taking prior to your surgery. Most herbal and homeopathic medications interfere with anesthesia, cause bleeding, and inhibit wound healing.

**Smoking will affect how you heal. It is very important to discontinue smoking for at least 4 weeks before surgery (this includes use of smokeless tobacco products, and nicotine patches or gum).**

### **THE EVENING BEFORE YOUR SURGERY:**

Take a shower, shampoo your hair and wash your face. Do not use conditioner or hair spray after shampooing.

Make some jello and/or soup for after surgery.

Get a good night's rest.

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight if your surgery is scheduled before noon.

### **THE MORNING OF YOUR SURGERY:**

If you are taking medications, please discuss these with Dr. Kenkel. Some medications may need to be held the morning of your surgery.

Do not eat or drink anything if your surgery is scheduled before noon. If your surgery is scheduled after noon, you may have coffee or tea and dry toast no later than 6 hours before your scheduled surgery time.

Do not wear contact lenses, hairpieces or hairpins. Do not bring personal valuables such as jewelry or cash. Wear loose comfortable clothing, preferably a button or zip up top (do not wear a top that has to be slipped on over your head), loose pants, and comfortable, slip-on shoes.

Please be sure someone can drive you home and stay with you for 24 hours. Put a pillow and blanket in the car for the trip home. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home.

### **AT HOME AFTER YOUR SURGERY:**

Your hospital stay will be anywhere from 1-5 days. We encourage you to get out of bed as soon as possible. This helps you take deep breaths and prevents your lungs from collapsing.

You will have dressings on your incision sites for the first 3-5 days, after which you may cover your incisions with light gauze.

Drains will be removed anywhere from 3 days to 2 weeks. Make sure you keep track of your drainage.

Most of our sutures are dissolvable, however, we will remove the suture ends at 7-10 days.

As with all wound healing, the incisions will be red, lumpy, and numb for several months after surgery before they fade in color and smooth out.

To help assure the finest possible scar, steristrips should be placed over the incisions beginning at one week to help support them in the first few months of the wound-healing phase.

Strenuous activity and exercising is to be avoided for at least one month after surgery. This includes lifting anything heavier than five pounds in weight.

We will begin arm exercises that will help prevent immobility of your shoulder joints. These will be reviewed prior to discharge.

Second stage reconstruction begins anywhere from 3 months to 6 months after your first procedure. At that time your tissue expander may be replaced with a permanent implant and/or nipple reconstruction. This surgery is typically done as an outpatient.

After this has healed, in two months, we will tattoo to color the nipple and the surrounding skin to match the other side. This is done in our office under local anesthesia.

Other touch-ups are frequently needed every 2 to 4 years.

## **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Call my office immediately if:**

1. You have a sudden onset of pain, fever, or redness.
2. You are concerned about anything.

**Be particularly alert for fever (oral temperature greater than 101°), excessive pain at the surgical incisions, nausea, vomiting, bleeding, dizziness, shortness of breath, rash, rapid heart beat, or rapid breathing rate.**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Strenuous activities and exercise are to be avoided for at least two weeks after your surgery. You may gradually resume normal activities after 48 hours being careful to avoid any activity that causes pain or discomfort. Strenuous activity/heavy lifting of objects greater than 5 lbs. should be avoided for 4 – 8 weeks after your surgery.

Bruising and swelling are normal and will disappear in time.

All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact is to be avoided. Use a sunscreen with an SPF20 or greater and contains zinc oxide for at least 6 months.

You may resume driving when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications and when a sharp turn of the steering wheel will not cause pain. Typically this is 4 to 7 days after your surgery.

Please take all medications carefully and as directed. Please follow all instructions which may accompany the medications, such as taking it with food or avoiding alcohol, driving restrictions, etc. Take medications at the specific times they have been ordered. Failure to take your medications as instructed could influence your results.

Remember to follow any special instructions, which have been given to you and call our office if you have any questions.

**OUR TELEPHONE NUMBER IS (214) 648-3227  
(answered 24 hours a day)**