

Benrus Surgical

Breast Care

After your Mastectomy

Wound care:

You will have one incision.

All stitches are buried under the skin and “super glue” or steri-strips are used to hold the skin together. The glue will peel off. The steri-strips will fall off. If you believe the steri-strips are causing skin irritation notify us.

If you have a dressing or wrap, you may remove it the day after surgery. Don't get the drain sites wet until drains are removed. You need to recover the drain sites with bandage until drains are removed. You do not need to recover the incision unless it feels more comfortable to be covered.

Apply ice packs to the incision the first night and as needed thereafter.

You may shower after the drains are removed. Dial and Safeguard are good anti bacterial soaps to use. No creams or lotion to the wound until the glue peels off or steri-strips fall off.

Don't shave or use deodorant to the affected side for 2 weeks.

There may be bruising after surgery, this is normal. An intensely red, hot and tender breast is not normal and should be reported.

There may be slight drainage from the wound. Place a dry gauze or bandage on the wound to absorb drainage. Bright red blood should be reported.

Pain:

You will be given a prescription for hydrocodone. If your pain is not as severe, you may use extra strength Tylenol every 4-6 hours. In 48 hours it is ok to use ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil).

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Exercise:

You may use your arm on the affected side. No lifting greater than 10 pounds, reaching above shoulder level or strenuous activity until the drains are removed. Begin American Cancer Society exercises after drains are removed.

Work:

You may return to work in 4-6 weeks. Possibly sooner with sedentary job.

When to call doctor:

Fever greater than 100.5

Increasing pain at the incision site.

Large amount of drainage that is soaking the bandage.

If the area around the incision becomes red, inflamed, or foul smelling.

Avoid:

Having your blood drawn in affected side forever. Having your blood pressure taken on the affected side forever.

Follow up:

Call the office for appointment in 5 days for drain removal. Drains will be removed when output is less than 40 cc for 24 hour period.

At your follow up appointment, we will discuss your pathology. We will discuss scheduling appointments with a medical oncologist and radiation oncologist. You will need to heal at least 3 weeks before you begin radiation therapy or chemotherapy, should that be indicated.