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Post Operative Suggestions Following Mastectomy

ACTIVITY:

Plan to limit your physical activity after the mastectomy. Be sure to arrange a ride home, since you will not be able to operate a motor vehicle for at least one week. Avoid any tasks that require fine physical coordination until the following day.

For most people, light activity can be resumed a few days after surgery. Some patients may feel they fatigue easily for several days after the surgery. You will be taught arm exercises at the hospital to help restore the normal range of motion in your arm.

CARE OF INCISION:

Once you are at home, you will be asked not to shower until you drain is removed. It is fine to take a "sponge bath". Make sure your incision is covered with large bandage. Once your drain is removed, it is fine to shower or bathe, but do not soak in a tub until wound is completely healed.

Wear your mastectomy bra for several days, even while you sleep to give support and ease discomfort.

You will have a drain under your arm. Many people find it is helpful to safety pin the drain to the inside of their shirt, which will keep it hidden. Be sure to empty your drain and also to record how much drainage you are having. You will be asked to bring this record with you to your postoperative visit.

PAIN:

There may be some pain or discomfort at the operative site. You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Follow the directions given by your doctor.

DIET:

Resume your normal diet following surgery. It is normal for your appetite to be slightly less the remainder of the day of surgery. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids.

FOLLOW-UP CARE:

Return to the office as the surgeon requests. Please call for an appointment a day or so after your surgery.

You may call for biopsy results 48 hours after surgery if you do not hear from our office. Please be aware that sometimes pathology takes a little longer.

Do not hesitate to call our office at any time should a specific question arise. Call immediately if you develop severe pain, bright red bleeding, or a fever over 100 degrees.