



## **Lipedema Pre- & Post-Operative Instructions**

### **Before Surgery:**

1. Have your labs work including a CBC, BMP, and EKG faxed to our office and the hospital from your primary care doctor. We also recommend that your primary care doctor clear you for surgery within 2 months of surgery.
2. Do not take ibuprofen or aspirin 10 days prior to surgery. If you are on any medications that thin the blood such as Xarelto, Coumadin, or Plavix please let our office know as these are a contraindication for lipedema surgery.
3. Let our office know if you are on any medications that impair healing such as prednisone or immunologic for rheumatic conditions as these are a contraindication for lipedema surgery
4. Use PhisoHex (Hibiclens) soap to wash your entire body for the two days prior to your surgery
5. Nothing to eat or drink after midnight the day of surgery.
6. Please bring all your prescription medications with you when you go for surgery. It's best to fill your medication before surgery.
  - a. Medications generally include:
    - i. An antibiotic like Cephalexin to minimize the risk of infection
    - ii. A narcotic for severe pain.
      1. Please also our guide on minimizing narcotics after surgery
    - iii. A medication to minimize the risk of blood clots such as aspirin, Lovenox, or Xarelto

### **After Surgery:**

7. Many patients are admitted for 23-hour observation in the hospital. Admitted patients are hydrated aggressively with IV fluids and have a bladder catheter in

so your fluid output can be monitored. It is normal for your dressings to ooze during this time

8. The morning after surgery, your catheter will be removed, and your IV fluids should be stopped. A blood draw will be done to confirm suitability for discharge. The nurses will perform a full dressing change. You will need to walk and go to the bathroom to be discharged home.

### **Going Home:**

9. You need to have a responsible adult drive you home. It cannot be Uber. We recommend you have a mattress protector for the car in case you ooze from your bandages.
10. If your drive home is more than one hour, we recommend stopping to get out of the car and walk around every hour.

### **Diet/Nutrition/Liquids**

11. We recommend you drink a LOT of fluids. We cannot emphasize this enough. Focus on liquids more than solids. “If your pee is clear, nothing to fear, dark yellow or brown, we are going down!”
  - a. We recommend Gnarly Sports Nutrition (<https://gognarly.com>) such as their Gnarly Hydrate. Be warned: it may taste gnarly.
12. A light diet is best after surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or jello. You may start a regular diet the next day.
13. We recommend patients take an iron supplement (ferrous sulfate) every day after surgery. A vitamin C supplement can also be taken to improve healing. There are some brands that have Iron with Vitamin C.
14. Consider drinking a glass of prune juice two times a day starting the day after surgery. If unable to have a bowel movement after 2 days postop, drink half (regular size bottle, regular strength) bottle of Milk of Magnesia. Wait 8 hours and drink the other half if 1<sup>st</sup> does not successful to produce results. Then follow dosage on the label.

### **At Home:**

15. After surgery, it is important for you to have someone available to stay with you for the first 24-48 hours, as you may be weak or drowsy. You may require help the first few times you get out of bed.

16. Oozing is normal from the incision sites. We recommend a mattress protector to protect your bed. Mattress protectors can be purchased at Target or Walmart.
17. You may take a shower 1-2 days after surgery. When showering clean incisions with mild soap and water. No soaking in a tub for the first 3 weeks after surgery.
18. You may apply Neosporin and a bandage to all incisions for 5-7 days. Do Not use peroxide, alcohol, and or any topical treatment on incisions unless instructed by our office.

### **Compression**

19. You will be sent home with either an abdominal binder or a compression wraps. Please wear it 24 hours a day. Remove when you bath or shower. Be careful that the compression wrap does not bunch up and put too much pressure on your skin, especially around the thighs as skin injury can occur.
20. You may remove all the compression wrapping at 24 to 48 hours after you go home, shower, and apply your own compression garment. Our patients have had good experience with Marena ([www.marena.com](http://www.marena.com)) compression Garments.
21. It is important to be walking early and frequently, move your legs and ankles when in bed. Keep legs elevated, when in bed, for the first 2-3 days. Please don't cross your legs as this can increase the risk for blood clots.
22. Manual Lymphatic Drainage is a controversial topic after surgery without strong level 1 evidence for its benefits. As we have seen MLD be associated with seromas, we cannot recommend MLD for the first month after lipedema surgery.
23. After 1 month, massage or MLD to the surgical sites may help increase circulation and alleviate the hardness felt underneath the skin. Request a lymphatic massage therapist.

### **What Else to Expect**

24. Call if you have a temperature higher than 101.5 degrees.

25. Swelling and bruising are a normal expectation following surgery. Bruising could be apparent for as long as 3-4 months afterwards. The bruises will move down your body as they are absorbed.
26. When feeling begins to return, take your pain meds immediately, even if the pain is not severe. The medication works faster when taken early. Everyone has pain but the tablets make it tolerable. Severe pain rarely lasts beyond 2-3 days.
27. Once you do not need narcotic strength pain medicine, you may transition to Tylenol. Follow instructions on the Tylenol bottle. (Do not combine Tylenol with narcotics as most narcotic pain medications contain Tylenol already.)
28. No heavy lifting or straining.
29. No driving till you are off the narcotic pain medicine.
30. Remember, the outcome of your surgery depends upon the care you take of yourself.
31. \*NO tanning or heating pads until approved by your surgeon.
32. The body retains fluids in response to surgery so do not expect to see any immediate weight loss for the first 2-3 weeks. In the long run you will see more of a change in the way your clothes fit than a decrease in pounds.
33. It is normal to have an itching sensation and/or numbness following surgery in the areas that underwent liposuction. This will gradually subside over the next 2-3 months.
34. Follow up appointments are 2 week and 9 weeks after surgery, with more frequent visits if issues arise.

**By following these instructions, you are reducing the risk of surgical complications. Should you have questions, we are here for you!  
Please call us at 703-596-1660.**