

Pre-Surgery Instructions: Abdominal Etching

Three Weeks or More Before Surgery

There may be several weeks between your decision to have surgery and your actual surgical date. During this time there are several important considerations:

- **Practice proper fitness.** Do not engage in an aggressive or new fitness routine, however, practicing good fitness habits is an important factor in your overall health and well-being. Stretching exercises and low-weight strength training now can help to enhance your posture and your strength in the weeks following surgery.
- **Good nutrition.** Eat well during the weeks prior to surgery. Crash dieting, over-eating or high alcohol intake can greatly affect your overall health and well-being. A healthy, balanced diet is essential.
- **Stop smoking.** Smoking can greatly impair your ability to heal. You must be nicotine and smoke-free for at least 4 weeks prior to surgery. You must also be free of any nicotine patch or nicotine-based products for a minimum of 4 weeks prior to surgery.
- **Lead a healthy lifestyle.** In the weeks prior to surgery maintain the best of health and hygiene. A lingering cold, virus or other illness can result in your surgery being rescheduled. Make certain to address any illness immediately, and advise our office of any serious illness or change in your health.
- **Prepare and plan.** Schedule any time off of work and any support you will need at home in the days following surgery, including housework, child care, shopping and driving. Make certain a responsible adult is enlisted and confirmed to drive you to and from surgery, and that someone is confirmed available to stay with you around the clock for at 24 hours, following surgery.
- **Pre-operative testing.** Make certain to schedule all of the pre-operative testing and clearance you have been given. Medical clearance and pertinent lab data should be faxed by your physician to our office.
- **Relax and enjoy life.** Stress and anxiety over life's daily events, and even your planned surgery can affect you. While some anxiety is common, any serious stress or distress over the thought of surgery is something you must discuss with our office. We are here to support you and answer all of your questions. We want your decision to be one made with confidence.

Two to Three Weeks Before Surgery

This is an important planning and preparation time. Follow all of the skincare and health habits you have begun in addition to the following:

- **Prepare and plan.** Put your schedule together for the day before, day of, and first few days following the procedure. Share this with all of your key support people.
- **Fill your prescriptions.** Some pain medication prescriptions may need to be filled ON THE DAY these prescriptions are written. Our office will advise you accordingly.
- **STOP taking the following for the duration before your surgery.** Taking any of the following can increase your risk of bleeding and other complications:
 - **Aspirin and medications containing aspirin**
 - **Garlic supplements**
 - **Ibuprofen and anti-inflammatory agents**
 - **Green tea or green tea extracts**
 - **Vitamin E**
 - **Estrogen supplements**
 - **St. John's Wort**
 - **All other medications as directed**
- **Pre-operative clearance and information.** If they have not been completed and results filed with our office, make certain to undergo ALL pre-operative testing.
- **Vital information.** A preoperative visit or call is essential to review your health, your goals, and any vital information including allergies and health considerations.
- **Fitness.** Don't over-do it. Avoid anything strenuous or that could potentially cause injury.
- **Good nutrition.** Continue taking your supplements as directed.
- **NO SMOKING.** Stay away from secondhand smoke, too. Your healing and health depend heavily on this.
- **Lead a healthy lifestyle.** Practice good hand-washing and avoid large crowds, or individuals who are ill. Do not risk catching a virus or cold: no kissing on the mouth, sharing beverages or other high risk opportunities for contacting viral or other illnesses.

- **Avoid sun exposure.** Sun damaged skin can more readily produce irregular scars.

One Week Before Surgery

Confirm your day of surgery plans. This includes your transportation and after-care (a responsible adult for the first 24 hours, around the clock).

- **Review your prescription orders and instructions.**
- **Purchase Polysporin or other ointment as recommended** and 4×4 inch gauze squares.
- **Purchase any compression garments required.** You may wish to purchase more than one garment for laundering purposes.
- **Confirm all lab results and paperwork have been received by our office** if you have not already done so.
- **Continue to practice healthy habits, nutrition and fitness.** No strenuous exercise. No saunas, hot tubs, steam baths or mud wraps. No smoking or alcohol .
- **Find your comfort zone.** Locate the most comfortable place where you can gently recline and recover. You don't want to be testing locations or pillows the day of surgery.
- **Shop for magazines, books and other things to keep you busy** and entertained in the day or two following surgery.
- **Wax or shave your bikini area and legs.** It may be uncomfortable to do so in the days immediately after surgery.
- **Relax.** Call our office with any unusual anxiety or concerns. Get plenty of rest. If you have trouble sleeping, call our office.

One Day Before Surgery

- **Pack your bag for the day of surgery.** This should include:
 - **All paperwork**
 - **Reading glasses**
 - **Your identification**
 - **Warm, clean cotton socks**
 - **All prescription medications**

- **Saltines or other crackers in case of nausea during your ride home**
- **Your post-surgical compression garment**
- **Expect a pre-anesthesia call** to review your state of health for surgery
- **Confirm your route to and from surgery or the recovery center** with the responsible adult who will drive you. Also confirm plans with your 24-hour support person and make certain he or she has all of your post-operative instructions.
- **Shower as directed.** Use an antibacterial, fragrance-free soap. Shampoo your hair. Do not use any hair gel or other styling products, scented skin creams or moisturizers. Do not use any deodorant, hair spray, perfume or cosmetics. Remove all fingernail and toenail polish.
- **Do not eat or drink anything after midnight.** No candy, gum or mints. Anything more than a small amount of water as needed for brushing teeth or swallowing medication may result in the need to cancel surgery.
- **Relax!** Get plenty of rest and avoid unnecessary stress.

The Day of Surgery

- **NOTHING by mouth.** Anything more than a small amount of water as needed for brushing teeth or swallowing medication may result in the need to cancel surgery. This includes candy, gum, mints.
- **Dress appropriately.** Do not wear cosmetics, jewelry of any kind, contact lenses, hair clips, or body piercings. If there is something you cannot remove, let the admitting nurse know right away.
- **Wear comfortable, clean, loose-fitting clothing.** Do not wear jeans or any tight-fitting bottom; rather have a pair of loose, drawstring sweatpants to wear home. Wear slip on, flat shoes with slip proof soles; no heels. Wear clean cotton socks, as the operating room can feel cool. For your comfort, wear a zip or button front top. No turtlenecks.

Medications to Stop Before Surgery

Medications should be stopped before surgery as directed. Most medications interfere with surgery and/or anesthesia. Please advise the doctor of any medications, herbs, or supplements you are currently taking so necessary adjustments are made prior to your surgery date.