

# DIEP FLAP BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

## Post-Surgical Guide



### INCISIONS

- Your incisions are closed in multiple layers with absorbable sutures
- The surface is sealed with a medical glue
- Your abdominal closure may feel tight
  - Keep your body flexed when in bed or relaxing in a recliner by placing two pillows behind your back and a pillow under your knees. When walking, you may need to bend at the knees and flex the hips to relieve tension the first week.

### DRAINS

- Use proper hand hygiene; such as a gel sanitizer on hands before caring for drain.
- Family member/friend strip/drain the JP bulbs and record accurate output using clear cups.
- Discard drainage in toilet only.
- Call Doctor for any increase in bright bloody drainage, cloudy drainage, increase in pain, loss of suction (non-depressed bulb), leaking around JP insertion site, or clogged bulb.
- If there is accidental dislodgement of drain: apply pressure with gauze and call Doctor **immediately**.
- Support drains with the Velcro belt provided by hospital.
- Your drains will stay in place until they are outputting about 20 ml per 24 hours or less. Expect the breast drains to stay in for about 1 week and the abdominal drains to stay in for about 2 weeks.

### EMERGENCIES

\*\* After hours, call Medlink Paging Service at (512) 323-5465

- Any signs of infection, call Doctor IMMEDIATELY
  - Temperature greater than 101.00 degrees
  - Significant swelling
  - Tender, red, swollen, warm areas, pus, yellow or green drainage
  - Swollen/painful or darkened/blackened skin
- ABSOLUTELY NO ICE or HEATING pads to incisions/breasts

### SHOWER

- While drains are in place, sponge bathe with mild soap like Dove - DO NOT SHOWER.
- After drains are removed, shower daily with mild soap like Dove.
- Use a very soft washcloth, do not rub the area, pat area dry.

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### ACTIVITY

- Activity for the first 4-6 weeks after surgery:
  - Relax, rest, light activity within the home only for first 2 weeks
  - No twisting, no lifting greater than 5-10 lbs for 4-6 weeks
  - No pressure on breasts
  - No side lying while sleeping for 6 weeks. May tilt with pillows after 4 weeks.
  - May elevate arms to shower, but not above shoulders
  - Wear surgical bra for 6 weeks. **No underwire bras** for 6 weeks.
  - May drive after 2 weeks if off all prescription pain medication.
  - May go back to work at 4 weeks if on "light duty."

### MEDICATIONS

- Take two Aleve in the morning and two in the evening
- For additional pain control, take prescribed narcotic pain tablets every 4-6 hours as needed.
  - Prevent constipation by taking one dose of Miralax daily