Paul A. Lambert, M.D.

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**LATISSIMUS DORSI FLAP BREAST RECONSTRUCTION**

**POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS:**

It is not uncommon to develop fluid accumulation in the back and in the reconstructed breast after your drains are removed. Do not be alarmed. Usually the body will absorb the fluid as the healing process continues. If the accumulation of fluid becomes uncomfortable, it may be drained without discomfort in the office.

You can expect numbness in the back and over the incisions and reconstructed breast, which may last for several months. Some numbness may be permanent. Therefore, NO warm, hot, or cold compresses should be used directly on the surgical area until you receive further instructions from Dr. Lambert.

**ACTIVITY:**

* Rest at home. Activities of daily living may be carried out as tolerated. No heavy lifting (greater than 10 lbs) or strenuous activity (aerobics, stretching, vacuuming, laundry, prolonged bending at the waist) for six to eight weeks following surgery. Walking as tolerated is permitted and encouraged.
* Do not sleep or lie on your breasts for four weeks.
* You may drive in two to three weeks depending on how you feel, and provided you are not taking any prescribed pain medication.
* AVOID SMOKING and being around anyone who is smoking for two months.
* Bathing: you may shower when you get home from the hospital. Gently cleanse the operative area with soap and water. If you have Steri-Strips over the incisions, they may get wet, just pat them dry and leave them on until they fall off themselves, or until you come back to the office.
* Do not use peroxide, alcohol, creams, ointments, or lotions on the incisions.
* Do not apply heat (heating pad, hot water bottle, etc.) to your back or breasts.
* Sexual activity may be resumed with YOU feel comfortable.
* You may return to work within six to eight weeks, depending on your recovery and what type of work you do. This will be discussed with you and Dr. Lambert at your postop visits.
* Avoid direct sun exposure for a minimum of one year. Use a sunscreen with SPF of at least #15. Tanning beds should be avoided.

**DIET:**

* Begin with sips of liquids and gradually progress to a regular diet, unless otherwise instructed.

**DRESSINGS:**

* You may remove the dressings to shower. If you have Steri-Strips on, leave them on until you come in for follow-up, or until they fall off themselves.
* Empty your drain reservoirs and measure and record the amount in mL’s every eight hours. The doctor will determine when they are to be removed depending on how much drainage there is.
* Continue to wear a bra for eight weeks, 24 hours a day, removing it only to shower.

**MEDICATIONS:**

* Do not take medicine on an empty stomach, it may cause nausea.
* Take Tylenol or Extra-Strength Tylenol for pain. Do not take aspirin or ibuprofen, or any medication containing these unless specified by your doctor.
* Take your prescribed pain medication with food as needed.

Notify our office immediately if you develop: FEVER GREATER THAN 100 DEGREES, SEVERE PAIN NOT RELIVED WITH PAIN MEDICINE AND REST, INCREASED SWELLING OR BLEEDING, NAUSEA OR VOMITING. Call our office at (540) 722-2280 if you should have any problems.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the instructions stated above.

Patient Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_