



## **Abdominoplasty Post Surgery Instructions**

### **After your surgery**

- Leave all dressings in place until you have your first post-operative appointment.
- Make sure that dressings stay dry and clean; you may sponge bathe around the dressings
- Wear the surgical tummy tuck binder day and night for the first 6 weeks. It may be removed for laundering and for bathing after the dressings are removed. It can also be adjusted to your comfort (it should not be too loose or too tight, but snug)
- Do not lie in bed for long periods of time after surgery. You should be up and walking around several times a day starting on the first day. Gradually start to walk more and more upright over the first week post surgery. No running, workouts, or lifting over 10lbs for 6 weeks after surgery. No abdominal exercises for at least 3 months after surgery.

### **Things to expect after surgery**

- Swelling & tenderness in the entire abdomen post surgery is normal. The tenderness usually lasts longest in the rectus muscles where the plication was done.
- It is normal for the abdomen skin to feel numb. Much of the sensation will return over time (6-12months) although the scar is usually numb in the long term.
- The dressings will be removed in the surgeon's office within the first week after surgery. Please leave the dressings in place until you see your surgeon.
- You will have steri-strips over the incisions that will stay in place after the dressings are removed. These will peel off on their own over 2-3 weeks.
- If you have a drain it will need to be emptied daily. The nurses at the hospital will show you how to do this. Please keep a record of how much is coming out of each drain every 24 hours. These will be removed typically 1-2 weeks after surgery.
- You can shower 3 days after the drains are removed (not before), over the steri strips. However do not immerse the incisions in a bath, pool, hot tub or any other sitting water for 4 weeks post surgery, or until your surgeon says this is okay.
- After the steri-strips fall off, apply the scar gel (from Dr. Klok) to the incisions morning and night. Do this for several months after the surgery. Additionally, use Vaseline on the incisions if they start to look dry. This will keep the incisions well moisturized.

### **Reasons to call the office (604-281-3866 during office hours) or go to the emergency department (after hours)**

- If the abdomen girth increases in size significantly and you develop increasing pain and bruising over a short period of time. This may mean you are bleeding. Seek medical attention.
- You will have some redness right around the incisions, which is a normal part of the healing process. However, if the redness starts spreading and the incision becomes very tender, you might have an infection. Seek medical attention.

#### **REMEMBER THAT....**

**Surgical scars can take a full 12 months or more to fully mature (soften and fade) and it is normal for them to be red and sometimes have lumps or bumps for the first 6-12 months. Regular scar massage and scar gel can help with this. Also it is very important that the scars are protected from the sun.**