

## **POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: BREAST SURGERY**

### **PAIN MEDICATION**

- Your pain medication contains a narcotic plus Tylenol.
- Take the pain medication as prescribed by Dr. Kryger. Remember not to take additional Tylenol on top of the prescribed pain pills.
- Don't wait for the pain to be severe before taking the pills. Take them as soon as you begin to have discomfort.
- Pain pills often cause nausea if taken on an empty stomach. Make sure to take them after eating some bland, non-fatty food.
- The pain pills also cause constipation. If this is a problem use an over-the-counter stool softener such as Colace.

### **PAIN PUMP**

- You may have a pain pump that drips local anesthetic directly into your incision. The pump works on its own. It should be empty after about 48 hours.
- Once it is empty you can simply pull it out by removing the clear bandage and pulling out the catheter.
- It is completely normal for the catheter to have some blood-tinged color to it.
- It is also normal for some of the numbing medicine to leak underneath the clear bandage.

### **DRAINS**

- Drains should be emptied and measured twice a day (or more often if they fill up quickly).
- They should also be stripped or milked twice a day. Make sure the nurse shows you how to do this before you go home.
- You may have a clear dressing over the drains. Keep it as dry as possible. If the dressing comes off, wash around the drain sites daily with soap and water.
- The drains are removed when each drain is collecting less than 30 cc in a 24 hour period. Call the office to schedule removal of the drains.

### **DRESSINGS**

- Do not remove the steri-strips, paper tape or clear dressing that is directly on the incisions. Dry them after you shower.
- Any other gauze dressings can usually be removed the day after surgery.
- Any incisions that are not covered by tape or steri-strips should be kept moist with antibiotic ointment applied several times a day.
- If you came out of surgery with a bra on, wear it at all times except in the shower until instructed otherwise.
- Do not wear an underwire bra for 6 weeks.

### **SHOWERING**

- You may shower the day after surgery, even if you have drains.
- Do not take a bath until instructed otherwise.
- The drains can get wet in the shower as described above.
- Place a wash cloth around your neck and pin the drains (with safety pins) to each side of the cloth so that the drains are not hanging from your skin.

#### **ACTIVITY**

- Stay as active as possible. Walking, climbing stairs, and moving around helps the circulation and significantly reduces the risk of developing a blood clot.
- Avoid lifting, pushing, or pulling objects over 5 lbs until instructed.
- Do not exercise until instructed otherwise.
- Anything that can be done with your elbows close to your sides is safe. Do not raise your arms above your shoulders.
- You may drive once you are no longer taking pain medication.

#### **EATING**

- It is very common to have nausea from the anesthesia that can last 24-48 hours after surgery.
- If you are nauseated stay hydrated by drinking water or clear liquids.
- Start with liquids, and progress slowly to solid foods. Begin with bland low fat foods such as crackers or toast.

#### **SLEEPING**

- Avoid sleeping on your stomach until all soreness has subsided.
- For the first few days after surgery, take pain medications before you go to sleep.

#### **COMPLICATIONS**

- Please call the office at (805) 777-3877 if you have any problem. If you call after 5:30 pm or on weekends, the office phone will ring directly to Dr. Kryger's cell.

Call immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Chest pain, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath.
- Significant bruising or swelling that is much greater on one side than the other.
- Redness and warmth around the incisions.
- Drainage or fluid coming out of the incisions.
- If you notice any signs of increasing firmness of one or both breasts, even months after the operation, please notify us promptly so that treatments can be started.
- A fever over 101.0 degrees.

#### **FOLLOW-UP VISIT**

**Call the office the day after surgery at (805)777-3877 to schedule your follow-up appointment in about \_\_\_\_\_ days.**