

LIPOSUCTION POST-OP INSTRUCTION SHEET

● EMERGENCIES

A hematoma is the most common emergent event within the first 24 hours. If your abdomen swells to twice its size or your drains bulbs fill immediately (within 30 minutes) after emptying, call Dr. Cooper immediately. Rest assured ~ this is not a subtle event! You will know when to call.

For routine matters, please call the office during normal business hours (9AM – 5PM). If you have an emergency that cannot wait, I am available by cell phone (307) 699-3115 on evenings & weekends. Kylee is also available by cell phone at (307) 222-4194. Please respect our family time & call **ONLY** for urgent or emergent issues. Non-emergent phone calls or texts after hours & on weekends will be subject to a **\$100.00** fee.

Examples of urgent or emergent issues include the following: sudden onset or extreme swelling of the surgical site, redness / warmth involving your incision(s), fever >101.5 or unilateral calf pain or swelling. If you have a life-threatening emergency, such as crushing chest pain or shortness of breath, call 911 immediately. Do not try to reach me first. If you have any questions on a Thursday or Friday, please call the office to have those questions answered. Do not delay those questions & have those issues become an urgent matter over the weekend.

● NARCOTICS AND PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

Nausea is normal when taking multiple medications. To minimize this, avoid taking medications on an empty stomach. Try to stagger your medications 20-30 minutes apart. You may “halve” the pain pills or muscle relaxers if they are too strong for you. If your pain is relatively well-controlled, you may alternate your pain medication with extra-strength Tylenol. Motrin / Aleve / Ibuprofen may also be used beginning 7-10 days following your procedure.

You will receive ONE prescription for pain medication. No refills on narcotics will be authorized for this procedure, so please use them wisely. Refills on all other prescriptions will not be authorized after hours or on weekends. Please plan ahead accordingly.

If you are taking narcotics for any other reason prior to your procedure, please take this into consideration. Consultation with your pain management physician prior to your surgery is highly encouraged & is the responsibility of the patient.

Arnica and Bromelain are recommended homeopathic supplements which facilitate resolution of bruising and swelling after surgery. These can be found online, at your local pharmacy, or at Whole Foods.

● ANESTHESIA

You may experience a sore throat after surgery. This is common after general anesthesia & will resolve in a few days.

● NAUSEA

Nausea is common after general anesthesia. Anti-nausea medication will be prescribed for you. A clear liquid diet is recommended until the nausea subsides, after which time you may resume a regular diet.

● BANDAGES & INCISION CARE

Your small incisions will be dressed with waterproof dressings. If these become saturated or need to be changed, simply remove these dressings and redress with gauze and paper tape. Change as often as necessary.

Cold compresses are acceptable. However, please **DO NOT APPLY ICE OR HEAT DIRECTLY** to the surgical site. Your recently operated skin cannot sense extremes of temperatures, which can result in heat or cold burns and compromise your results.

You may experience a significant amount of drainage from your incisions. This is **NORMAL** and may continue for 1-3 days. Absorbent pads or bath towels can be used to cover your sheets and chairs to keep them clean.

Areas that have undergone liposuction may be numb or tingly.
The sensation **WILL** eventually return to normal, but it may take up to a full year.

Expect bruising, discoloration, and swelling in all areas treated. This will decrease during the first 3 weeks. Swelling will continue to decrease for up to 3 months, although you may notice that you are more swollen at certain times of day (morning or night) depending on your level of activity.

Areas of firmness or “lumpiness” can develop in the suctioned areas. This is **NORMAL**. They will soften & eventually resolve over time (usually weeks to months). Rolling the treated areas using a small, padded paint or lint roller will help “smooth out” these areas and desensitize the skin.

You may experience swelling of your face, hands, and feet in the first few days after surgery. Do not take a “fluid pill” or diuretic. Your body will naturally eliminate this fluid over time.

Lastly, **DO NOT WEIGH YOURSELF** for several weeks! You will discover that you have actually gained weight immediately after surgery. This is due to mild fluid retention and will resolve with time (days to weeks).

- **PERSONAL CARE**

Your incisions will be dressed with waterproof dressings. You may shower on post-op day 3 facing **AWAY** from water with your original waterproof dressings intact. If you have removed and redressed your incisions with gauze and paper tape, simply remove these dressings, shower, and then replace the gauze and paper tape.

- **DIET**

If you experience nausea after surgery, a clear liquid diet is advisable until the nausea subsides. Otherwise, there are no dietary restrictions after surgery. Drink plenty of water! Water intake & stool softeners will help minimize constipation from narcotics (pain medication) after surgery.

- **CONSTIPATION**

Constipation is a common complaint after surgery & can be associated with anesthesia and narcotics (pain medications). Hydration & utilizing pain medication only when absolutely necessary will help minimize this. Stool softeners & laxatives (Colace, Dulcolax, Miralax) are over-the-counter medications that can help alleviate your symptoms. If these are insufficient, a Fleets Enema is the next best option.

- **SLEEP**

Finding a comfortable position after surgery can be a challenge! Sleeping in a flexed position (with pillows or in a recliner) may be more comfortable for the first few days after your procedure. You may gradually resume sleeping in your natural, preferred position thereafter.

- **ITCHING / RASHES**

Itching around your incisions is normal & is to be expected after surgery. It is considered a sign of healing. However, severe itching with redness or blistering is often a sign of a reaction to medications or adhesive. If you experience itching with redness or blistering around your incisions, gently remove your

dressings & take an antihistamine. Benadryl, Claritin, Allegra, Zyrtec, or Xyzal are all acceptable. You may also use Benadryl cream, but do NOT use any topical containing hydrocortisone.

Please let us know if you have a sensitivity to adhesives or tape prior to surgery. This will help avoid skin sensitivity involving your incisions.

- **GARMENT**

Continuous compression (SPANX) is strongly encouraged for the first 6 weeks. Over the years, we have found that SPANX tend to be more comfortable than surgical compression garments, and patients tend to be more compliant with compression if the garment is easy to wear. It is your responsibility to purchase compression wear prior to surgery. You may remove the garment to shower. Otherwise, wear should be 24/7 for the first 4-6 weeks while gradually decreasing the length of time worn thereafter.

- **STITCHES**

Your stitches are dissolvable and will not need to be removed.

- **DRIVING**

Please wait at least 24 hours after you have discontinued prescription pain medication to operate a vehicle.

- **EXERCISE**

You may resume light activity (treadmill or elliptical) after ~2-3 weeks, with gradual return to your “normal” level of activity after 4-6 weeks (jogging, biking, etc). You may return to work whenever you feel as though you are able.

- **SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

You may resume sexual activity once you feel you are ready. Please remember that you have recently had a major surgical procedure and utilize good judgement.

- **ALCOHOL**

You may consume alcoholic beverages once you are no longer taking prescription pain medication. However, please take into consideration your other medications and how they may interact with alcohol.

- **FEVER**

If you experience any increase in warmth, redness, or a fever (>101.5), please call the office.

- **SWIMMING**

No Swimming (Chlorine / Saltwater / Other) for 2 weeks.

- **TRAVEL & SCHEDULING**

No travel for 2-3 weeks following your procedure.

Our OR time is valuable. If you already have plans to travel, please take this into consideration prior to choosing a date for your procedure to avoid multiple rescheduling attempts with our office and the surgery center.

- **SOCIAL SUPPORT AND HOME CARE**

You **must** have someone to stay with you for 24 hours following your procedure. You will need assistance the first few times you get out of your bed or chair to prevent falls. If you live alone and need recommendations for after-hours care, please let us know and we will be happy to provide you with resources.

Pre-plan your meals and make sure you are prepared for your recovery with snacks, drinks, and extra wound care supplies. Hand sanitizer, alcohol, gloves, and extra gauze are useful to have on your bedside table for the first few days following your procedure.

- **MENTAL HEALTH**

We understand that surgery is stressful and are here to support you with any surgical-related questions during your recovery. However, you are responsible for the quality of your mental health. If you take any medications for mental wellness, please make sure those are optimized prior to your procedure to make your recovery as smooth and pleasant as possible.