Dr. Stuart Geldenhuys
PLASTIC SURGEON

BBA - PERI-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE YOUR SURGERY:

ARRANGE TO HAVE A RESPONSIBLE ADULT STAY WITH YOU THE FIRST EVENING AFTER SURGERY. YOUR PROCEDURE WILL BE CANCELLED IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ASSISTANCE. (ALTERNATIVELY YOU CAN BE ADMITTED TO THE 'TCSI' OVERNIGHT CLINIC)

SMOKING

Smoking significantly increases the risks of major complications and should be stopped 4 weeks prior to surgery, and at least 2 weeks after. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of your surgery.

ALCOHOL

No alcohol is permitted for 48 hours before surgery.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

Be well nourished, hydrated and rested before your surgery. Avoidance of carbohydrates and saturated fats prior to and after surgery assists with reducing swelling.

MEDICATIONS

Please consult Dr Geldenhuys before discontinuing any chronic medications.

Many over the counter products and medications can inhibit blood clotting which can increase the risk of bleeding during and after surgery.

Medications most commonly implicated include those containing Aspirin & Non-Steroidal Anti- Inflammatories (e.g. Voltaren, Brufen). They should be discontinued 2 weeks prior to your procedure.

Avoid Arnica, Omega oils, Vitamin C, E and all herbal medications (Echinacea, Ephedra, Garlic, Ginseng, Ginkgo, Kava, St.John's Wort, and Valerian) 1 week prior to surgery.

Please ask us for a more comprehensive list if you take any additional herbal supplements/ medications.

ADDITIONAL PRECAUTION & ADVICE

Report any infections; signs of a cold, flu, sore throat, fever, skin (boils, bites scratches etc.), urinary tract or dental. These may increase the risk of surgical site infections or pneumonia and may necessitate delaying your surgery for a few days/ weeks.

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Obtain any desired “comfort items” that will facilitate a pleasant environment for your recovery; music, comfortable clothing, pillows, healthy pre-prepared meals.

Avoid sun/tanning beds for two weeks prior to surgery. ‘Sunburn’ will result in your surgery being cancelled.

Please contact the office PRIOR to your surgery if you have any questions, do not save questions for the morning of your surgery.

THE DAY OF SURGERY:

You should have nothing to eat or drink for 6 hours before your operation. However, if you are required to take chronic medication during this time, please do so with a small sip of water.

On arrival at the clinic you may be offered a pre-med and/or anti-nausea medications. Dr. Geldenhuys and your anaesthetist will see you in the ward prior to surgery.

WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU:

✓ Any current and chronic medications.
✓ Medical Aid membership card
✓ ID Document
✓ Credit Card or other agreed means of payment
✓ Toiletries if required.

WASHING

Medicated soap will be provided for you to use at home on the morning of your operation. This is to be used for both body and hair.

PRODUCTS

Do not apply make-up, perfume/deodorant, nail polish or hair products after washing.

JEWELRY

Remove all jewellery.

CLOTHING

Wear loose, comfortable clothing and footwear. You should wear front opening garments with buttons or zips.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

MOBILITY

- 1st & 2nd Week: Arms to stay below shoulder level

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- 3rd Week: Arms up to shoulder level
- 4-6 Week: Arm elevations above shoulders
- During the first week, you will sleep on your back.
- Get out of bed every 2-3hrs and walk a little bit, then back to resting. (except at night !)
- Avoid any strenuous movements and heavy lifting.

ACTIVITIES

Return to normal activity should be a gradual process and should never cause discomfort. Stop if you are uncomfortable!

- First 3 weeks: You may take a gentle walk within a few days, "short Sunday stroll". You may drive after 7 days if you are comfortable but we generally prefer no driving for the first 10 days.
- Weeks 4-6: 'Legs' & light cardiovascular exercise only (lower body movement, no arms)
- Week 7-12: Gradual increase in cardio exercise & light upper body training (abdomen, biceps - no peck exercises for first 3 months)

DRESSINGS DRAINS & BRAS

At the time of surgery, dressings will be applied on your incisions.

- One drain will be placed in each breast to evacuate the fluid that accumulates after surgery and enable you to heal faster.
- Drains are usually removed on the 2nd day after surgery.
- You will be fitted with a support bra, which you should wear day and night for 8 weeks after surgery. (You may, of course, remove it to shower and launder). Once the swelling has decreased and scars are settling, you can buy new bras to fit your new size. This usually takes 3 months.

Support Bras: For the first 8 weeks from surgery.
Underwire Bras: From 8 weeks.
Push up Bras: From 3 months.

(Many patients find the spots bras comfortable and continue to wear them throughout their recovery.)

BATHING & SHOWERING

- Shallow baths or hand held shower until your drains are removed.

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- 24 hours after your drains are removed you may shower.
- If you prefer to bath, do not allow the incision lines to soak.

SCAR MANAGEMENT

- The incisions will be covered with micropore and dressings.
- After 2 days your dressings will be removed and the micropore will stay on for about 10 days.
- Apply bactroban ointment, twice a day, for 10 days after surgery, OVER the micropore.
- After the 10 days you will be provided with a topical cream or Silicone gel which you should continue to apply for 3-4 months.(this will be explained to you after surgery)

SUTURES

- Most sutures are absorbable and are placed under your skin.
- There is usually a 'tail' from the outermost layer of sutures that will be trimmed at your post operative appointment at 7-12 days.
- Any additional sutures will be removed at the same time.

SUN

Scars erythema (redness) takes 12-18 months to fade. Sun exposure can result in hyperpigmentation.

- For the firs 4 months after surgery scars should be protect them from the sun.
- UV radiation can penetrate through a bathing suit. Wear a sunscreen with a skin-protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 at all times when outdoors. Re-apply every 2 hours. (please access our Blog topic on UV protection)

MEDICATION

- Take medications as directed.
- Contact Dr Geldenhuys if you develop nausea, heartburn, diarrhoea, constipation or bloating.
- If pain persists despite pain medications please contact Dr Geldenhuys.

DIET

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- Fluids are critical following surgery. Hydrate yourself with non-carbonated and non-alcoholic beverages. Be sure to drink plenty of water and fresh juices.

- Have nutritious food and eat when you are taking medications.

CALL THE ROOMS (021) 424 5218 IF YOU HAVE:

- A temperature greater than 37˚C.

- Bleeding from the incision or drain sites.

- A sudden increase in pain, or swelling of the breast or around the incision site.

- Any questions regarding your care.

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