

# RICHMOND PLASTIC SURGEONS

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## MICROSURGICAL BREAST RECONSTRUCTION POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

**BRA:** You should not wear a brassiere for two weeks following your procedure. This is to prevent excessive compression on the blood supply to the DIEP or other free flap. After the first two weeks, you may wear a soft bra that does not fit too tightly for the next month. Avoid underwire bras for one month after surgery.

**SURGICAL DRAINS:** Please refer to the “JP Drain Instructions” sheet for details.

**ACTIVITY:** Take it easy for the first several days. No cleaning, housework, or strenuous activity. Do not lift anything over 10 pounds, including children. No running, weight lifting, cross fit, or other strenuous activities until four weeks. However, do not remain constantly in bed. You should walk at least three times daily, with assistance if needed. It is normal to feel “tight” through your abdomen when standing for the first several weeks, so you may want to hunch over slightly when walking.

**BATHING:** You may shower after you go home. Use a long piece of string or yarn to make a necklace to loop through the JP drain tabs, so they are not dangling in the shower. NO tub baths, hot tubs, swimming, or any submersion in water for one week after removal of all JP drains. Skin glue covering your incisions will fall off on its own. If it is still present at two weeks, you may peel or scrub it off.

**MEDICATION:** You will receive prescriptions for an antibiotic, narcotic pain medication, non-narcotic pain medicine (gabapentin), and a stool softener. Take the antibiotic until it is finished, the narcotic pain medication as needed according to the directions, the gabapentin until it is finished, and the stool softener while you are on prescription narcotic pain medication. If you are no longer taking any of the other pain medication, then you may stop the gabapentin if you wish. Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medication. You will receive a prescription for full strength (325 mg) aspirin for two weeks. You may take non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (e.g. ibuprofen, advil, etc.) instead of, or in addition to, your prescription pain medication, according to the directions on the bottle. Keep drinking plenty of fluids. If you are unable to have a bowel movement, you may take an over the counter laxative pill or suppository such as Dulcolax.

**PHARMACY:** Your prescriptions were sent electronically to the following pharmacy: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXERCISE:** You may resume non-strenuous activities as tolerated two weeks after surgery. Normal activity can be instituted one month after surgery, starting slowly, and increasing as your body allows. Weight training, cross-fit, sexual activity, and other vigorous activity should not be started until six weeks following surgery.

**THINGS TO WATCH FOR:** If the DIEP flap skin turns purple, black, or cold, or if you experience excessive or sudden swelling, spreading or increasing redness, increasing pain, foul-smelling drainage, separation of any incisions, fever, shaking chills, or any other concerns, please call the office immediately (804-285-4115).

### FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT:

( ) Your appointment is scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_.

West Creek Office of Richmond Plastic Surgeons  
1630 Wilkes Ridge Parkway, Suite 201  
Richmond, Virginia 23233

Midlothian Office of Richmond Plastic Surgeons  
14401 Sommerville Court  
Midlothian, Virginia 23113

( ) Please call **804-285-4115** to schedule an appointment for \_\_\_\_\_.