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Postoperative Instructions Following Abdominoplasty

You will be bruised and swollen following Abdominoplasty. The swelling will be greatest for 36 hours after surgery. There will be drainage of fluid from the incisions for several days postoperatively. You will likely have small drain tubes to collect this fluid. This is very common. These are to be emptied and the amounts recorded twice daily. You may have some oozing of blood from your incisions for several days postoperatively. You can expect the swelling to diminish slowly over several weeks following your surgery. The bruising may persist for 20 days or longer.

You can promote more rapid healing by following these simple rules.

1. Keep your head and back elevated on several pillows while sleeping.
2. Drink 8 glasses of water a day.
3. Wear your compressive garment at all times until your Doctor instructs you otherwise. You may remove it to bathe or adjust it as necessary.
4. You may sponge bathe until your drains are removed. Empty and record the fluid amount in the drains twice daily.
5. Take your prescribed antibiotics and pain medication as directed.
6. Do not exercise until your doctor instructs you to do so (usually 4 – 6 weeks).
7. Moderate walking (10-15 minutes) is very good non-stressful exercise. You may do this several times a day.
8. Do not smoke following your surgery.
9. Do not take Aspirin, Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen, Naprosyn or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications unless your Doctor instructs you to do so.
10. Call your doctor if you have any fever or chills, shortness of breath, leg pain or swelling, or other concerns.