



## ***MASTECTOMY: POST OP INSTRUCTIONS***

Always review your discharge instruction sheet given to you by the facility where your surgery was performed.

IF YOU HAVE DISABILITY OR FAMILY LEAVE FORMS, YOU MUST BRING THEM TO THE OFFICE FOR PROCESSING. **DO NOT GIVE THEM TO YOUR DOCTOR.**

1. A prescription for pain medication may be given to you upon discharge. Take your pain medication as prescribed, if needed. If narcotic pain medicine is not needed, then you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil) as needed.
2. Take your usually prescribed medications unless otherwise directed.
3. If you need a refill on your pain medication, please contact your pharmacy. They will contact our office to request authorization. Prescriptions will not be filled after 5pm or on weekends.
4. You should follow a light diet the first few days after arrival home, such as soup and crackers, etc. Resume your normal diet the day after surgery.
5. Most patients will experience some swelling and bruising on the chest and underarm. Ice packs will help. Swelling and bruising can take several days to resolve.
6. It is common to experience some constipation if taking pain medication after surgery. Increasing fluid intake and taking a stool softener (such as Colace) will usually help or prevent this problem from occurring. A mild laxative (Milk of Magnesia or Miralax) should be taken according to package instructions if there are no bowel movements after 48 hours.
7. Unless discharge instructions indicate otherwise, leave your bandage dry and in place until your next appointment in 3-5 days. You may take a limited sponge bath. No tub baths or showers until the drains are removed. You may have steri-strips (small skin tapes) in place directly over the incision. These strips should be left on the skin for 7-10 days. If your surgeon used skin glue on the incision, you may shower in 24 hours. The glue will flake off over the next 2-3 weeks. Any sutures or staples will be removed at the office during your follow-up visit.

8. DRAINS: If you have drains in place, it is important to keep a list of the amount of drainage produced each day in your drains. Before leaving the hospital, you should be instructed on drain care. Call our office if you have any questions about your drains.
9. ACTIVITIES: You may resume regular (light) daily activities beginning the next day—such as daily self-care, walking, climbing stairs—gradually increasing activities as tolerated. You may have sexual intercourse when it is comfortable. **Refrain from any heavy lifting or straining until approved by your doctor.**
  - a. You may drive when you are no longer taking prescription pain medication, you can comfortably wear a seatbelt, and you can safely maneuver your car and apply brakes.
  - b. RETURN TO WORK: \_\_\_\_\_
10. You should see your doctor in the office for a follow-up appointment approximately 3-5 days after your surgery. Your doctor's nurse will typically make your follow-up appointment when she calls you with your pathology report. Expect your pathology report 2-3 business days after your surgery. You may call to check if you do not hear from us after three days.
11. OTHER INSTRUCTIONS: \_\_\_\_\_  
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WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR:

1. Fever over 101.0
2. Nausea and/or vomiting
3. Extreme swelling or bruising
4. Continued bleeding from incision
5. Increased pain, redness, or drainage from the incision

The clinic staff is available to answer your questions during regular business hours. Please don't hesitate to call and ask to speak to one of the nurses for clinical concerns. If you have a medical emergency, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911. A surgeon from Central Carolina Surgery is always on call at the hospital.

For further questions, please visit [www.centralcarolinasurgery.com](http://www.centralcarolinasurgery.com)