



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Before Surgery	3
While In The Hospital	5
General Discharge Instructions	7
When To Call Your Doctor.....	9



INTRODUCTION

You have been admitted to NYU Medical Center for breast reduction surgery. Please read this handout which has information that should answer many of your questions. This handout discusses what you can expect during your stay in the hospital and when you go home. It describes how the members of the healthcare team-physicians, nurses, and others will work with you, the most important team member, to ensure a smooth transition home. Please share this information with your family members and/or friends.

The amount of time for recovery and discharge varies according to your needs and will be decided by your surgeon. Generally, you will be discharged the day after surgery. Many people are surprised at how quickly their activity progresses after surgery. The health care team will be helping you with any concerns you have about discharge.



BEFORE SURGERY

Several days to a week before surgery, you will be scheduled for an appointment at Pre-Admission Testing. At this appointment you will:

- have an interview and an assessment with a nurse and a resident from your surgeon's service.
- meet with an anesthesiologist who will explain the type of anesthesia you will have.
- have blood tests, EKG and, in some cases, a chest x-ray.
- sign a consent form giving your permission for the surgery after it has been explained to you.
- have additional tests if they are indicated.

ADDITIONAL PREPARATION

- Shower the night before or morning of surgery.
- The morning of surgery take your medications with a sip of water as recommended by your physician. If you are taking diuretics (water pills) or medications for diabetes, make sure you get specific instructions.
- If you are taking Coumadin (warfarin), check with your doctor for specific instructions.
- Avoid aspirin, aspirin containing products and medications from the class known as non steroidal anti-inflammatory agents for one week prior to surgery. However if you are taking aspirin once a day for the heart, vascular or neurological reasons, check with your doctor for specific instructions.



Breast Reduction Surgery

May 1999

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery.
- You only need to bring slippers and a robe to the hospital. Please do not bring any valuables, such as jewelry, cash or credit cards, to the hospital.

DAY OF SURGERY

You should report to the Same Day Admission (SDA) Unit, 400 East 34th Street, 6th floor, at the time specified. You will be admitted and final preparation will be made.

- Immediately before you go to the Operating Room (OR), you will need to change into a hospital gown and remove all jewelry, dentures, etc.
- You may be given a sedative to help you relax.
- The surgery will generally take 1-3 hours (preparation and actual surgery). You will spend an additional 1-3 hours in the Recovery Room.
- Your visitors can wait in the Same Day Admit Waiting area (2 visitor limit) or in the Stoler Family Waiting Area on the 1st floor of Tisch Hospital. It is advisable for one contact person to let the surgeon's office know where he/she can be reached.

Immediately after surgery you will be taken to the Recovery Room on the 6th floor until the effects of the anesthesia wears off. Generally, from the Recovery Room you will be transferred to a room on one of the surgical floors. Visitors are not allowed in the Recovery Room, but your family members or friends will be able to visit you soon after you are transferred to your room.



WHILE IN THE HOSPITAL

The following are general guidelines regarding what you can expect during your stay in the hospital.

DIET

- Fluids will be given intravenously until you can eat.
- The evening after surgery, you will be given liquids and advanced to solid foods as tolerated. Then, you will resume your usual diet.

ACTIVITY

- Your nurse will show you how to do coughing, deep breathing, use of the incentive spirometer, and leg exercises. You should do these exercises every 1-2 hours while awake.
- You will be helped to get out of bed to go to the bathroom the evening of your surgery.
- At first, you will walk short distances. You should gradually increase the distance and the frequency of these walks. Ask your nurse about having your family or friends help you with this.
- It is important that when you are in bed that the head of the bed be raised to a 30 degree angle.
- Your doctor may prescribe a consultation with a physical therapist.



Breast Reduction Surgery

May 1999

MEDICATION

- Pain medications will be given to keep you comfortable. Taking pain medication will help you sleep, increase your activity and do coughing and deep breathing exercises. At first, it may be given by injection, then in pill form. You will be asked to rate your pain before and after taking your medication to make sure you are comfortable.
- Other prescribed medication will be given to you.

CARE OF YOUR INCISION

- Initially your incision will be covered by a dressing that your surgeon will change.
- You will have a drain at the surgical site. This will generally be removed before you go home.
- Your doctor or nurse will discuss instructions regarding caring for your incision at home.

OTHER INFORMATION

- The time when you will be ready for discharge depends on your specific needs. If you have questions or concerns about your discharge plan, speak with your doctor, nurse or social worker.



GENERAL DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

The following are general guidelines. Individuals vary in their return to their usual activity. Your physician and nurse will review information that is specific for your individual situation.

ACTIVITIES

- When in bed, you should elevate the bed to a 30 degree angle. You can use pillows.
- Gradually increase your activities. Do not overexert yourself to the point of fatigue. If you become tired, rest more frequently.
- Do not lift anything over **5-10 pounds**.
- Discuss with your doctor when you can drive, return to work and resume sexual activity.
- Unless instructed otherwise (ex. if you have a drain in place), you can shower when you go home.

INCISION CARE

- Unless instructed otherwise, when you shower, wash the incision site with soap and water and rinse thoroughly. Pat dry. Do not rub. It can be left open to the air and does not need a dressing. If clothing irritates the incision, a dry sterile pad can be placed over the incision.
- Inspect the incision every day and contact the doctor if you notice increased redness, drainage, swelling or separation of the edges of the incision.

DIET



Breast Reduction Surgery

May 1999

-
- You can resume your usual diet.

MEDICATIONS

- If you need medications, prescriptions will be given to you before you go home. If you receive a prescription for antibiotics, make sure you take them for as long as prescribed.

GENERAL INFORMATION

If you have had breast reduction surgery, you may be unable to breastfeed. Speak with your surgeon and obstetrician/gynecologist for specific information.



WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

Your doctor should be notified if you have any of these possible danger signs:

- Fever over 100.8° or shaking chills.
- Increased swelling, bleeding from incision site, redness or drainage from the incision site.
- The edges of the incision are separating.
- An increase in pain or pain not relieved by pain medication.

FOLLOW-UP

- Call your surgeon's office for an appointment when you go home. He/she will usually want to see you 7 to 10 days after discharge.
- Referral to visiting nurse or home care agency is usually not needed. However you can discuss this with the healthcare team.