



Total Mastectomy

TOTAL MASTECTOMY

DAY OF SURGERY

THINGS TO EXPECT TODAY

- You will be transferred from the Recovery Room to a room on one of the surgical units.
- The nurse will monitor your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, respirations, temperature) and check the dressing over your incision(s).
- You will have a tube draining fluid from your incision site. The nurse will check the drain frequently, empty and measure the amount of fluid. The nurse will show you how to empty the drain.
- Your affected arm will be elevated with a pillow to a 45° angle so that the wrist is higher than the elbow.
- Your nurse will review information about arm care and drain care with you.
- You will receive pain medication, IV fluids and IV antibiotics.
- You may experience tingling, numbness, or burning of the affected arm. These are normal sensations after breast surgery.

THINGS WE WILL HELP YOU DO TODAY

- Use the Incentive Spirometer at least 10 times every hour you are awake. How high did you get the incentive spirometer this time? _____
- You will be helped to get out of bed to go to the bathroom.
- Ask your nurse about your pain management program. You will be asked to rate your pain before and after taking pain medication to make sure you are comfortable.
- You will be given liquids. If you tolerate them, you will be able to resume your usual diet.
- Think about questions you have about going home. Write them down so that you remember to ask them.



Total Mastectomy

DAYS 1 - 2 AFTER SURGERY

THINGS TO EXPECT

- You will be allowed to resume your usual diet. The IV will be discontinued if you are taking adequate fluids. You may be given antibiotics orally.
- You will be shown how to empty the drain.
- You may be visited by the Breast Center Nurse Coordinator and Social Worker who will discuss discharge concerns.
- You will be given your pain medication.
- If you wish, you may receive a phone call from a *Reach to Recovery* volunteer after discharge from the hospital.

THINGS WE WILL HELP YOU DO TODAY

Review your information packet. Read the sections on Discharge Instructions and Drain Care. Find out when you need to return to the surgeon's office for a follow up visit.

- Stay out of bed as much as possible. If needed, the nursing staff will help you the first few times. Gradually increase the amount of time you are up.
- Take your pain medication as needed to make you comfortable. Remember you will be asked to rate your pain before and after receiving medication.
- Do the coughing and deep breathing exercises and use the incentive spirometer. How high did you go? _____
- Keep the affected arm elevated on a pillow while in bed or sitting in a chair. The angle should be less than 45° degrees.
- Ask to speak with a Social Worker if you have questions about home care after your discharge.
- Look at your incision so that you can report any changes such as redness, drainage or swelling to the surgeon.



Total Mastectomy

- Empty the drain while your nurse is present. This will make you more comfortable doing it when you go home.

EVENING

- Remember to use the incentive spirometer and take a walk around the nursing unit.
- Write down any remaining questions you have. Confirm transportation home.
- The evening before discharge have family take home some of your belongings.
- The nursing staff will be making evening and night rounds. If you need something, please let the staff know.

SLEEP WELL!

DAY OF DISCHARGE

THINGS TO EXPECT

- Staff will review discharge instructions.
- You will receive any needed prescriptions.

THINGS TO DO TODAY

- Wash up.
- Find out when you need to return for a follow up visit with the surgeon.
- Review the discharge plan with the nurse and sign it. Ask any remaining questions.

GET HOME SAFE!