



James A. Rieger, MD
316-652-9333

Post Operative Information for Breast Reduction

The following information is intended for your well-being and will assist you during your recovery period. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask or call us at 316-652-9333 (there is an answering service 24 hour/day). For after hours, post-surgical concerns if you have left a message and have not received a call back within 30 minutes, you may call Kansas Medical Center at 316-300-4000 and have them contact me. If you are experiencing a medical emergency and need immediate medical attention please go to the nearest emergency room or if necessary dial 911.

Some reasons to call:

- Fever
- Pain not relieved by medication
- Severe pain
- Severe or asymmetric swelling
- Redness, warmth, drainage or odor from the operative site
- Bleeding
- Persistent nausea, vomiting, inability to urinate or constipation
- If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding your condition or surgery

A Note About Questions

Your healing journey is unique, and no two recoveries are exactly alike. If something worries you, please reach out to our office directly. We know your medical history and surgery details, and can give you advice that's safe and specific to you. Online forums and social media may offer general information, but they can also be confusing or misleading. We're here for you—day or night—so please call us anytime you have questions or concerns. **316-652-9333**

Following surgery you will go to the post-anesthesia care unit to recover prior to leaving the facility.

- Steri-Strips (paper tape) will be placed over your incisions, and you'll be wearing a surgical bra. It's normal to feel swelling and tightness in the chest, which can cause discomfort. This gradually improves over the next few days to weeks. Some numbness in the skin over the breasts is also common and usually improves over time, though it may take up to six months.
- Two clear plastic drains are placed during surgery. These drains will be in place for about one week. Please refer to the drain information sheet for care instructions. Nursing staff will also review drain care prior to going home.
- You can expect to feel sleepy for a day or two after surgery.

Being lightheaded or having weakness after surgery is possible. It is recommended to have someone assist you to and from your car, with your seat belt, dressing/undressing, in the bathroom and getting in and out of bed. **It is advisable that you have a responsible person stay with you for the first 24 hours following surgery.**



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Avoid the risk of extreme swelling & post operative problems by avoiding the six "S's"

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|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) Straining | 4) Sunshine |
| 2) Stooping | 5) Smoking |
| 3) Sexual activity | 6) Strenuous activities |

Follow-up: We will see you two weeks following your surgery. This appointment is typically made at your pre-op appointment. However, if this was not done, please call our office (316-652-9333) to do so.

"DO"

- Have your prescriptions filled right away.
- Completely finish your antibiotics and use your pain medication as needed, following the directions.
- Start your antibiotics the afternoon you get home from surgery—take one dose in the afternoon and one before bed. Beginning the next day, take them four times a day: at breakfast, lunch, dinner, and before bed.
- Begin with liquids and light foods such as jello, crackers, soups, etc. gradually progressing to a normal diet.
- Resume taking any prior daily prescriptions, UNLESS they are on the list of medications to avoid.
- You may shower two days after surgery. Do not wash the incision sites or press on on the breasts.
- Start walking slowly around your home as soon as you feel able. Moving around helps lower your risk of blood clots in your legs. Take it easy—don't push yourself too hard. Most patients are back to their normal activity level in about 6 weeks.
- Depending on the type of work you do you may return to work in approximately one week. Discuss this with Dr. Rieger.
- For the first six weeks, wear loose, comfortable support (e.g., a sports bra).

"DO NOT"

- Do not remove the steri-strips for approximately 12-14 days (unless they fall off by themselves), peel them off slowly.
- Do not take responsibility for children or needy adults.
- Do not bathe in a tub or swim in a pool for 4-5 weeks after your incision sites have closed.
- Do not use hot tubs or swim in lakes or oceans for eight weeks.



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- Do not use arms if this is painful. Do Not lift or reach for heavy objects, bend or strain for approximately 4-6 weeks.
- Avoid lifting, pushing, or pulling anything heavier than 5–10 pounds for at least 2 weeks.
- Do not make any important decisions or sign important papers in the 24 hours following surgery or while taking pain medication.
- Do not drive, operate machinery or tools until it is specifically allowed (usually three days) OR if you are taking narcotics.
- Do not use ice or hot packs.
- Do not participate in sports or workouts for 4-6 weeks.
- Do not put any pressure of the breasts for six weeks.
- Do not scratch or touch the incisions sights. You may use Benadryl by mouth for itching.
- Do not drink alcohol after surgery for one week. Never mix narcotics with alcohol.
- Do not wear underwire or pushup bras for eight weeks.

Remember

- Swelling and bruising usually improve within a few weeks but may shift toward your feet due to gravity—this is normal. Full healing takes time—typically 6 months, sometimes up to a year. Be patient; your recovery depends on your health and how gently you rest.
- Tell Dr. Rieger if a mammogram is needed in the first several months after surgery.
- You may take Tylenol if needed. However, many prescribed pain meds already contain Tylenol—do not take both, as too much can harm your liver. Avoid aspirin and any aspirin-containing medications for two weeks before and after surgery due to bleeding risks. If unsure, ask your pharmacist.
- Avoid direct sun on the breasts for one month, and use sunscreen regularly for the first year after surgery to protect the skin. You may apply moisturizers or creams after three weeks—avoid the incision sites if they are not fully closed.