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Post-operative Instructions for Mastectomy, Lumpectomy or Excisional biopsy with or without lymph node biopsy.

Findings:

Follow-up:

Your follow-up appointment is an in-office appointment at _____. See our office address below.

Your follow-up appointment is a D.A.P. appointment at _____. This will be at Georgetown Hospital through the diagnostic imaging department. Registration is done at Admitting. Please arrive about 15-30 min early to allow time to register.

Office Number 905-702-2629. The office is in the medical building behind Georgetown Hospital. .

Contact us if any concerns about wound healing or your post-operative course.

Address:

40 Hillside Drive, Suite 204

Georgetown ON L7G 4W3

Email: info@georgetowngeneralsurgery.com

Presenting to the Emergency Department:

If you have worsening pain, fevers, chills, nausea and vomiting or unable to tolerate fluids, or any significant concern regarding your wounds or your wellbeing after surgery, call our office. If you have severe symptoms and you need immediate assistance, come to the emergency department at for assessment. If possible return to Georgetown Hospital.

Medications:

Unless discussed, you may return to your regular medications following the surgery, once you are able to tolerate liquids. Any exceptions (for ex. Blood thinners) will be discussed with you. If you have any questions regarding your home medications contact my office or your family physician.

Other Instructions: _____

Pain Control

The first 1-3 days after surgery you will have soreness at and around the surgical sites and drain sites if applicable. This will improve with time. You may also notice, over the first 1-3 days, some throat soreness from the breathing tube inserted into the throat during the operation. This should improve quickly over time.

Your incisional pain will typically resolve within the first two weeks however you may have sensitivity at the incisions or surgical site for up to 6 months. In addition as the nerves at the surgical site heal you may have periodic short bursts of sharp pain burning or itching around your incisions and surgical site.

If you are having worsening pain despite pain medication or requiring more and more pain medication, call our office or present to the emergency department for assessment.

You will be sent home with a prescription pain medication like Statex. We recommend you take around the clock over-the-counter pain medication for the first 1-2 days after the surgery, alternating between Tylenol (325-975 mg) and Advil (200-600mg) every three hours, and supplementing with your prescription pain medication as needed. **If you are using a prescription pain medication make sure you use a stool softener as needed like Restoralax to avoid constipation.**

For example you could take 650 mg of Tylenol at 8:00 am and 400 mg of Advil at 11:00 am and if you have some persistent soreness after 30 min to 1hr take Statex (or other prescribed medication) at that time but continue to take around the clock Tylenol or Advil. DO NOT go over the maximum daily dose of any medication.

If your pain is minimal certainly return to as needed pain medication rather than taking it regularly but try to use Tylenol or Advil first rather than the prescription pain medication.

Speak to your doctor if you have any concerns with Advil or Tylenol including liver disease, kidney disease, a history of stomach ulcers or use of blood thinners.

Incision Care and Showering:

Typically there will be one large incision along your breast and if a lymph node biopsy was done, another smaller incision in the bottom of your arm pit. Your physician will discuss any significant modification from this.

- 1) **You will notice some bruising or swelling at your surgical site related to normal post-surgical changes.** If there is any significant warmth, increasing pain, increasing size

of the swelling or associated fevers, return to the emergency department or call our office.

- 2) Watch for signs of infection:
 - a. Increasing redness or warmth around the incision
 - b. Pus-like drainage
 - c. Excess swelling or bleeding
 - d. If you take your temperature and it is greater than 38.5 C in two readings 4 hours apart
- 3) Initially you will have a pressure dressing or tensor bandage placed over your incision(s) which can come off after 48hrs. Under typically there will be white rectangular shaped strips (steri-strips) over the wounds which should fall off after a week. If they do not fall off, please remove yourself after a shower, after 7 days. Glue residue can be removed with the help of alcohol swabs. Your incisions have dissolvable stitches that are buried under your skin.
- 4) You MAY have a drain coming from your side. If so, home care nursing will be arranged to assess the wound and drainage. The drain will typically be removed when there is clear drainage less than 30 mL/day. The drainage should be relatively clear and either yellow or light red in colour. As the amount lessens the colour can darken but should still be relatively clear in consistency. If there are any concerns of large amount of drainage or change in colour, let your physician know.
- 5) Keep the incisions dry and covered for the first 48 hrs.
- 6) You may shower after 48 hrs provided there is no concern about drainage or infection at the incision (see below). Please keep the drain site dry. It may be easier to do a sponge bath until you have your drain removed.
- 7) Do not soak the incisions, and pat dry after the shower. You may soak in a tub or pool **after** 2 weeks from when the drain are removed.
- 8) No ointments, powders or creams on the incisions unless discussed with surgeon
- 9) No additional dressings are needed on your incisions unless discussed with surgeon

Diet:

- 1) There are no long term changes to your diet.
- 2) After your surgery, while in hospital you will be immediately started on clear fluids and progressed slowly to a solid diet prior to discharge, although it is not a strict requirement for discharge.
- 3) You can slowly return to your regular diet, but for the first two to three days you may not feel like eating anything heavy.
- 4) After any surgery always make sure you are drinking plenty of water as dehydration can be a common cause of post-operative emergency visits.
- 5) Do not drink alcohol for the first 48 hrs after surgery and anytime while you are requiring prescription pain medication. Be very careful with alcohol as it can interfere with medications, and dehydrate you, and impair your recovery. If possible avoid for the first two weeks.
- 6) Bear in mind that constipation is common after surgery particularly if you are on a prescription pain medication. You can use a stool softener like Restoralax or a fibre

supplement like Metamucil for example to help ensure you have regular bowel movements.

Activity:

- 1) Immediately after your surgery you are encouraged to get out of bed and walk as this will decrease the risk of blood clots after surgery.
- 2) Please look at the range of motion and strengthening exercises given pre-operatively.
- 3) You are able to do most activities around the house including dressing yourself, walking up and down stairs.
- 4) Do not lift anything greater than 15 lbs for the first four weeks to avoid wound disruption. After two weeks you may slowly return to regular activity being careful to monitor any sensation of pain or strain on your incisions.
- 5) With respect to driving, you should not drive for the first 48 hrs after surgery and anytime you are requiring prescription pain medication. If you are easily fatigued, have pain that will restrict sudden movement or range of motion, or are having difficulty with being alert or concentrating, do not drive.
- 6) With respect to sexual intercourse, as long as the type of activity is not cause significant discomfort for your incisions you may slowly return to regular activity as you feel comfortable.
- 7) With respect to work, for jobs not requiring heavy lifting (greater than 15lbs) we recommend you take at least 1 week off, and possibly more depending on your recovery. With respect to jobs requiring lifting greater than 15 lbs you may require at least 4 to 6 weeks off work, depending on the work.