

My Day Surgery *Post-Op* Checklist

The day of surgery:

- You will wake up in the PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit). You may have oxygen, a blood pressure cuff, an IV, and/or other monitors attached to you at this point. You will probably stay in the PACU for 1-2 hours. You will have been given pain medication during surgery, so you should not be in much pain when you wake up.

Caring for yourself after day surgery:

- **Rest.** Surgery makes you tired. You can do most of your normal activities, but allow yourself frequent rest periods.
- **Pain relief.** You will be given a narcotic pain pill to take as needed after surgery. Some women do not need it at all, but it can be especially helpful the first night. Do not drive while you are taking narcotic medications. If your pain is mild you may also take Tylenol.
- **Support.** Wear a soft, tight bra for support after your surgery, even to bed for the first two nights. You can use pillows to support your breast in bed as well.
- **Ice.** You should use an icepack on your incision, 20 minutes on and off to reduce swelling. Sometimes fluid will collect at the surgical site. This is called a seroma. If it becomes uncomfortable, call your doctor's office.
- **Dressings.** There will be either surgical glue (Dermabond) or steri-strips over the incision. You can gently wash the area regardless, and pat dry.
 - Leave Steri-strips or Dermabond on until they wear off on their own.
 - There will be no stitches on the surface of your incision. They are under the skin and will dissolve over time.
- **Monitor yourself.** Watch for signs of infection, and contact your doctor's office if you note:
 - Increased redness around the incision
 - Foul-smelling drainage from the incision
 - Temperature above 101° Fahrenheit
- **Activity level.** Move your shoulder on the surgery side as tolerated. Don't let it stiffen up. You should avoid any activity that causes the breast to bounce for 2 weeks after surgery. This includes running, jumping, and the elliptical machine at the gym.
- **Bathing.** You can shower 24-48 hours after surgery. Do not soak in a bath tub or go swimming until you have seen your surgeon at your post-op appointment and have discussed this activity. In general you should not expect to soak in a bath tub or go swimming for at least 3 weeks following your surgery.

You will have a post-op appointment 10 days – 2 weeks after surgery. If your pathology results are ready prior to this appointment, you will receive them over the phone. If you have any concerns before your post-op appointment, please call your surgeon's office.