



## BREAST REDUCTION

### Post Operative Advice Sheet

1. You should arrange for someone to drive you home from hospital.
2. You will experience mild discomfort after your surgery and it is recommended that you take one or two pain relieving tablets (such as Paracetamol) on a regular basis for the first week or so. **DO NOT TAKE ASPIRIN OR ANY PRODUCTS CONTAINING ASPIRIN** as this may prolong or cause bleeding in the early post operative period.
3. Your breasts will be swollen and tender and there may be some bruising initially, though this should settle by two weeks. Though most of the bruising does settle by the first 14 days you will have a smaller degree of residual swelling which can take up to three months before this settles and you achieve your final cup size.
4. It is important to rest as much as possible for the first week after surgery and limit your arm movement for the first week.
5. I would have advised you to purchase a sports bra beforehand and it is wise to wear your bra day and night for the first two weeks to support the scar lines and provide maximal comfort. After two weeks you can wear the bra in the daytime only and by six weeks you can commence wearing underwired bras.
6. Buried, dissolvable stitches are most commonly used, but occasionally the dermis layer of the skin can be thin and in this instance a removable stitch will be used.
7. You should avoid getting the wounds or dressings wet for the first week.
8. At one week post operatively you will be seen by the nurse in the Dressing Clinic who will remove the dressing and inspect your breasts. If the wound is healing nicely at this stage you may recommence showering your breasts then. If the wounds are still a little moist after one week they will be redressed by the nurse and an appointment given to revisit the nurse in weeks time. Once the wounds are clean and dry you will be advised when you can recommence bathing.
9. It is very important in the early period after your operation that you move around your home as much as possible, setting yourself a daily walking programme and not lying in bed for protracted periods. After a good week of rest

you may commence gentle arm movements and arm exercises and by one week post operatively you should be ready to recommence light duties and after two weeks can commence light household duties, but should avoid heavy lifting for a month. By four to six weeks post operatively you may recommence light gym work, and should be able to return to full normal activities by six weeks.

10. Following breast reduction people feel confident to return to driving at various time periods, but you should refrain from driving for the first two weeks. After this you may recommence driving once you feel confident to undertake an emergency stop, until you feel confident to do this you should refrain from driving.
11. I would have advised that it is important to stop smoking prior to your operation in order to reduce the risks of complications.
12. Following the breast reduction, the type of job that you do determines when you can return to work.
13. The scar will take time to mature. Over the first six weeks your scar will become stronger and stronger. During those first six weeks the scar will pretty much look after itself. By weeks 3-4 you should commence moisturising and massaging this scar and rubbing quite vigorously, the aim being to soften the scar and speed up final scar maturation. The delicate scar tissue is at greater risk of sunburn if exposed to the sun, therefore, you are advised to avoid sun exposure to any scar tissue for the first six weeks of healing, after this if the area is to be exposed to sunlight you should apply sun protection factor 50 sun block to exposed scar tissue.
14. Though most people experience uneventful post operative recovery, if you develop any of the following you should contact the ward:
  1. **Temperature greater than 38.5°**
  2. **Severe pain not alleviated by simple painkillers**
  3. **Fresh bleeding from the wound, other than a minor ooze**
  4. **Sudden rapid enlargement of one or other breast**