



## Tissue Expander Surgery Discharge Instructions

### General

- No lifting arms at the shoulder (abduction) greater than 30-45 degrees
- Brushing your teeth or combing your hair is fine, but lower your head towards your hands as much as possible when doing so
- Activities of daily living (walking around the house, going to the bathroom, lifting the tv remote etc.) are all fine, but avoid all rigorous activities that may elevate your heart rate
- No lifting greater than 5-10 pounds (roughly a half gallon of milk). If you lift, lift with your elbows /knees as much as possible
- Climbing stairs is ok, but minimize as much as possible
- In general, listen to your body, **IF IT HURTS, DON'T DO IT!**

### Sleeping

- Sleep on your back at all times for the first 3 weeks after surgery. Side sleeping increases your risk of complications
- As much as possible, sleep with the waist flexed 30-45 degrees- this will limit swelling

### Driving

- No driving for 1 week following surgery or drain removal, whichever comes first
- No driving while taking prescription (opioid) pain medications

### Bathing / Dressings

- Your dressings consist of xeroform (yellow sticky gauze), absorbent pads and a surgical bra. The drains are secured in place with a stitch, a circular gauze pad and clear tape
- After 48 hours you may remove all dressings including xeroform and shower
- The gauze and clear tape over the drains should remain in place and can get wet
- I recommend you go to the drugstore and purchase Maxipads- there is no need to spend money on sterile gauze pads as nothing will be sterile once dressings are removed. Place the Maxipads over the incisions before replacing the surgical bra- this will prevent chafing of the bra on the incisions
- The Surgical bra should be worn at all times when not showering including while sleeping for at least the first 2-3 weeks after surgery



- Once the drains are removed, you may purchase a snug sports bra that latches in the front (so you can avoid lifting your arms over your head) to replace the surgical bra you were given. This should be worn at all times when not showering

### What To Expect After Surgery

- You will be sore and in some pain. Pain should be manageable with the medications you were prescribed, and you should take them as prescribed
- Inflammation peaks about 48-72 hours after surgery. Expect that your initial pain level may increase slightly over this period of time, and then should gradually decrease over the next 10-14 days
- Some bleeding through the bandages may occur for the first 24 hours after surgery and even stain the bra slightly.
- If bleeding is excessive (staining more than 25% of the bra or dripping), please call the clinic
- Expect to be more tired and “emotional” for at least 2 weeks following surgery. This is a very normal response to any major surgery and will improve rapidly after 2 weeks