



## ABDOMINOPLASTY CARE INSTRUCTIONS

**These instructions are provided to assist in the healing process and ensure best results. If you choose not to follow these instructions, it may increase your risk of possible complications and compromise results of the procedure.**

<b>WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY</b>	
<b>HOSPITAL STAY</b>	After an Abdominoplasty operation it is normal to stay in hospital at least overnight. Although the length required varies from a day stay to several nights, depending on the size of the surgery and your circumstances. This will be discussed with Dr Doyle prior to your surgery.
<b>HOSPITAL RECOVERY &amp; DISCHARGE</b>	<p>After your surgery you will wake up in recovery with drains coming from each hip region and also a pain pump that will deliver small amounts of local anaesthetic directly under the abdominal skin.</p> <p>Your time spent in recovery will depend on how you have responded to the surgery and the anaesthesia. The nurses will monitor you during this time and transfer you to the ward.</p> <p>After your hospital stay, once the staff will deem you fit to be released, they will call your nominated person to collect you (as you will be unfit to drive). You will be discharged with your drains and pain pump left intact and wearing a compression garment covering your abdomen to minimise swelling.</p> <p><i><b>Drains</b> – It’s unlikely that drains would be removed prior to discharge (however if you’ve had a minimal amount of drainage this may happen). For home care please refer to the directions on drain care on <b>page 2</b>. Our nurses will contact you from our office daily for drainage amount and to arrange a time for drains to be removed.</i></p>
<b>PAIN RELIEF</b>	You will be given a script for pain medication, for anti-nausea and antibiotics to take home with you. Your Anaesthetist will provide you a full list of instructions. Any medications you have been prescribed can be collected from the JFH pharmacy.
<b>PAIN LEVEL</b>	Expect your abdomen to have pain and numbness in areas. Maximum discomfort will occur during the first few days. If you do not feel your pain relief is adequate, please contact your Anaesthetist to discuss this further.
<b>COMPRESSION GARMENT</b>	You are required to wear the supplied compression garment for 23 hrs a day for 6 weeks. Until the drains are removed you will only wear the binder (preferably without underpants) thereafter you will only wear the Spanx (with underwear).
<b>POST OP APPOINTMENTS</b>	All future nursing appointments will be booked in advanced and prior to your procedure. Details will be given to you when you leave hospital ( <b>see Post Op appointment information in full on page 3</b> ).



### IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY continued

#### SUTURES / DRESSINGS

Your wound is likely to extend from hip to hip and there will be internal sutures that will dissolve in up to 6 months. If belly button was moved those sutures will need to be removed approx. day 10 – 14 post-surgery.

The outer dressing is waterproof and will help to keep dressings dry and intact. Please do not remove dressing, as your nurse will review them in your 10 - 14 day post-surgery review. Please notify our rooms if you have any concerns.

### HOME CARE FOR DRAINS

Drains assist in removing excess fluids caused by surgery. They also keep swelling to a minimum, so it is important for you to care for them properly. Please safely follow the instructions below:

Follow each step and repeat every 2-3 hours during waking time.

1. **Hold** drain upright so the collection bag is hanging at the bottom.
2. **Close** the top clamp
3. **Open** the bottom clamp
4. **Squeeze** the chamber (you may hear/see the fluid going into the collection bag)  
the chamber should be completely compressed.
5. **Close** the bottom clamp
6. **Open** the top clamp

Always make sure the top clamp is open and the bottom clamp is closed after this process.

If you have any concerns with your drains, do not hesitate to contact our rooms on (07) 5598 0988.



## WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY

<b>GCPS POST OP APPOINTMENTS</b>	The standard review appointments following an Abdominoplasty are as follows:
	1. If you go home with drains in, they will be removed when you are draining less than 40mls from each drain in a 24-hour period.
	2. Approximately 10 - 14 days post-surgery you will be reviewed by our nurse and during this visit the sutures may be removed from your belly button site (if applicable) remove the clear outer waterproof dressing and check your dressings.
	3. Approximately 3-weeks post-surgery you will be reviewed by our nurse and Dr Doyle. Your dressings will be removed, and you will be given a sample of <b>Stratamed</b> and shown how to apply it to your wound.
	4. Approximately 6-week post-surgery at your review with Dr Doyle you will be given a sample of <b>Strataderm</b> for further scar care. All other appointments following this vary slightly between patients. However, review appointments are quite common approximately 3 months and 6 months post-surgery. During one of these visits, you will have after photographs taken for your medical records.
<b>SCAR CARE</b>	<p>Dr Doyle's recommended topical scar treatments, are Stratamed and Strataderm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>STRATAMED</b> – Commence using approximately 3-weeks post-surgery, you will be given a sample to use until your next appointment (at approximately 6 weeks)</li><li>• <b>STRATADERM</b> - Commence using approximately 6-weeks post-surgery, you will be given a sample to use until completed.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Follow manufacturer's directions of use. It is recommended as a minimum treatment to continue daily applications for 60 – 90 days until satisfied and no further improvement is seen.</li><li>○ Once your sample has been used this product may be repurchased from our friendly reception team.</li></ul></li></ul>



## RETURNING TO DAILY ACTIVITIES

<b>HEALING / SWELLING</b>	For comfort and reduced swelling sleep with your knees slightly bent for as long as swelling persists. This will also help to reduce tension to your wound.
	You may experience some swelling and bruising of the abdomen. Majority of this will subside in 6 to 8 weeks. Your recovery is subject to your response to the healing process and is different for everyone.
	Healing time varies for everyone and it is not uncommon for lower abdominal swelling to last up to 6 months.
<b>EXERCISE / ACTIVITY</b>	Start gentle walking as soon as possible to help reduce swelling and lower the risk of blood clots.
	Allow yourself at least 1 to 2 weeks to recuperate before returning to non-strenuous work. Sexual activity should be avoided for a minimum of 2 weeks. Most patients may resume light exercise 5 to 6 weeks after surgery.
	Straining, bending, and lifting must be avoided since these activities might cause increased swelling, bleeding, and may cause disruption of the healing process. Strenuous exercise and activities are restricted for 6 - 8 weeks (such as weights, sit-ups, running etc).
<b>SWIMMING &amp; SUN EXPOSURE</b>	No ocean water or pool water for 6 weeks post-surgery or until your wounds are fully healed.
	Your scars will be reddened for about 12 months, and then should start to fade and soften. Avoid exposing scars to the sun. If sun is unavoidable always apply sunscreen.
<b>DRIVING</b>	You are not allowed to drive for the first few weeks after your operation for safety reasons. However, to be fit to drive you must no longer taking any narcotic medications and can safely and comfortably able to operate your car. For most people to be able to react and move without pain would be around 2 to 3 weeks. <i>If you are concerned, for insurance reasons, it may be wise to check with your provider.</i>

## CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any concerns regarding your care, please see our website for care information. Alternatively, do not hesitate to contact our rooms on (07) 5598 0988. If the rooms are unattended and you are unwell and need medical attention please seek treatment at your GP, an Emergency Department of your choice or call 000.