KIRWAN
PLASTIC SURGERY

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LOWER BODY LIFT PRE AND POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PRE-SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS: LOWER BODY LIFT

The following instructions are essential to a safe experience and good outcome. Use this as a checklist as you approach your surgery date. If you are unable to comply with these instructions, you must notify our office as soon as possible. As a result, your surgery may have to be postponed or delayed, at the judgment of Laurence Kirwan, MD. This is essential to your health and safety.

THREE WEEKS OR MORE BEFORE SURGERY

There may be several weeks between your decision to have surgery and your actual surgical date. During this time, there are several important considerations:

- Practice proper fitness: You need not engage in an aggressive or new fitness routine; however, practicing good fitness habits is an important factor in your overall health and well-being. Stretching exercises and low-weight strength training now, can help to enhance your posture and your strength in the weeks following surgery.
- Good nutrition: Eat well during the weeks prior to surgery. Crash dieting, over-eating or high alcohol intake can greatly affect your overall health and well-being. A healthy, balanced diet is essential.
- Stop smoking: Smoking can greatly impair your ability to heal. You must be nicotine and smoke-free for at least 4 weeks prior to surgery. You must also be free of any nicotine patch or nicotine-based products for a minimum of 4 weeks prior to surgery.
- Stop the BCP or any hormone supplemental treatment two weeks before and two weeks after surgery.
- Lead a healthy lifestyle. In the weeks prior to surgery maintain the best of health and hygiene. A lingering cold, virus or other illness can result in your surgery being rescheduled. Make certain to address any illness immediately, and advise our office of any serious illness or change in your health.
- Prepare and plan: Schedule any time off work, and any support you will need at home in the days following surgery, including housework, childcare, shopping and driving. Make certain a responsible adult is enlisted and confirmed to drive you to and from surgery, and that someone is confirmed available to stay with you around the clock for at least 24 hours following surgery.
- Pre-operative testing. Make certain to schedule all the pre-operative testing and clearance you have been given. Refer to the Pre-surgical Lab and Testing Orders form. Make certain all test results are received by Dr. Kirwan, as required.
- Relax and enjoy life. Stress and anxiety over life's daily events, and even your planned surgery can affect you. While some anxiety is common, any serious stress, or distress over the thought of surgery is something you must discuss with our office. We are here to support you and answer all your questions. We want your decision to be one made with confidence.

TWO to THREE WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

This is an important planning and preparation time. Follow all the good health habits you have begun in addition to the following:

- Prepare and plan: Put your schedule together for the day before, day of and first few days following the surgery. Share this with all of your key support people.
- Fill your prescriptions: Some pain medication prescriptions may need to be filled ON THE DAY these prescriptions are written. Our office will advise you accordingly.
- STOP taking the following for the duration before your surgery. Taking any of the following can increase your risk of bleeding and other complications:
    - Aspirin and medications containing aspirin
    - Garlic Supplements
    - Ibuprofen and anti-inflammatory agents
    - Green Tea or green tea extracts
    - Vitamin E
    - Estrogen supplements
    - St. John's Wort
    - All other medications indicated
- Pre-operative clearance and information: Make certain to undergo ALL pre-operative testing. Refer to the Pre-surgical Lab and Testing Orders form. Make certain all test results are received by Dr. Kirwan. as required. If medical clearance is required and not yet received, surgery may be cancelled at your cost.
- Vital information: A pre-operative visit or call is essential to review your health, your goals, and any vital information including allergies and health considerations. Our office will schedule your pre-operative visit.
- Fitness: Don't over-do it. Avoid anything strenuous or that could potentially cause injury.
- Good nutrition: Continue taking your supplements as directed.
- NO SMOKING: Stay away from second-hand smoke, too. Your healing and health depend heavily on this.
- Avoid sun exposure: Sun damaged skin can more readily produce irregular scars.
- Lead a healthy lifestyle: Practice good hand-washing and avoid large crowds, or individuals who are ill. Do not risk catching a virus or cold: no kissing on the mouth, sharing beverages or other high risk opportunities for contacting viral or other illnesses.

ONE WEEK BEFORE SURGERY

- Make sure that your bowels are regular and that you are not constipated before surgery.
- Confirm your day of surgery plans. This includes your transportation and after-care (a responsible adult for the first 24 hours, around the clock).
- Review your prescription orders and instructions.
- Purchase any compression garments required. You may wish to purchase more than one garment for laundering purposes.
- Confirm all lab results and paperwork have been received by Dr. Kirwan if you have not already done so.
- Continue to practice healthy habits, nutrition and fitness. No strenuous exercise. No saunas, hot tubs, steam baths or mud wraps. No smoking or alcohol.
- Make sure that your bowels are regular and that you are not constipated before surgery.
- Find your comfort zone. Locate the most comfortable place where you can gently recline and recover. You don't want to be testing locations or pillows the day of surgery. Shop for magazines, books and other things to keep you busy and entertained in the day or two following surgery.

- Do not wax or shave one week before surgery as this may lead to infection.
- Use the surgical wipes provided by the hospital
- Relax. Call our office with any unusual anxiety or concerns. Get plenty of rest. If you have trouble sleeping, call our office.

ONE DAY BEFORE SURGERY

- Pack your bag for the day of surgery. This should include:
    - All paperwork
    - Reading Glasses
    - Your identification
    - Warm, clean cotton socks
    - All prescription medications
    - Saltines or other crackers in case of nausea duringyour ride home
- Expect a pre-anesthesia call to review your state of health and anesthesia for surgery.
- Confirm your route to and from surgery or the recovery center, with the responsible adult who will drive you. Also, confirm plans with your 24-hour support person and make certain he or she has all your post-operative instructions.
- Shower as directed. Use Hibiclens to shower the night of and morning of surgery. DO NOT USE on your face or hair or get in your eyes!. Make sure that you pay special attention to your groin and between your buttocks. Shampoo your hair. Do not use any scented skin creams or moisturizers. Do not use any deodorant, hair spray, perfume or cosmetics. Remove all finger nail and toe nail polish.
- Do not eat or drink anything after 12 pm. Anything more than a small amount of water as needed for brushing teeth or swallowing medication may result in the need to cancel surgery. This includes candy, gum, and mints.
- RELAX! Get plenty of rest and avoid unnecessary stress.

THE DAY OF SURGERY

- NOTHING by mouth: Anything more than a small amount of water as needed for brushing teeth or swallowing medication may result in the need to cancel surgery. This includes candy, gum, and mints.
- Dress appropriately.
- Do not wear cosmetics, jewelry of any kind, contact lenses, hair clips, body piercing: (If there is something you cannot remove, let the admitting nurse know right away.)
- Wear comfortable, clean, loose-fitting clothing: Do not wear jeans or any tight-fitting bottom; rather have a pair of loose, drawstring sweatpants to wear home. You may wear a robe. Wear slip on, flat shoes with a slip proof sole; no heels. Wear clean cotton socks, as the operating room can feel cool. For your comfort, wear a zip or button front top. No turtlenecks.

POST-SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS: LOWER BODY LIFT

Once your surgery is completed, you must follow all the instructions given to you in order to heal properly and have a good outcome.

The following instructions are your obligation. Use this as a checklist of progress as you heal. Included are normal post-surgical experiences and key health considerations that may be a cause of concern.

NORMAL POST-OPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

Normal symptoms of lower body lift and abdominoplasty and signs to watch for following surgery include the following:

- Tightness and stiffness in abdomen: Bruising, swelling and redness: Tingling, burning or intermittent shooting pain: These are normal experiences as the skin, tissues and sensory nerves heal. Pain medication and muscle relaxants will help you cope with any discomfort. If you have drains, you may experience additional localized discomfort. Consistent severe pain should be reported to our office immediately.
- Skin firmness, hypersensitivity or lack of sensitivity: This is normal and will gradually resolve over time.
- Asymmetry: both sides of your body heal differently: One side of your body may look or feel different from the other in the days following surgery.

CALL THE OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A high fever, (over 101º) severe nausea and vomiting, continued dizziness or incoherent behavior, such as hallucinations.
- Any pain that cannot be controlled by your pain medication.
- Bright red skin that is hot to the touch.
- Black or dark skin
- Odor from the wound site.
- Excessive bleeding or fluid seeping through the incisions.
- A severely misshapen region anywhere on your abdomen or thighs or mons or severe bruising that is localized to one specific area.

To alleviate any discomfort, and to reduce swelling, you may apply cool, not cold compresses to the treated region. Crushed ice or ice packs must be wrapped in a towel before being applied to the skin. Do not apply ice or anything frozen directly to the skin. Apply cool compresses, for no longer than 20-minute intervals.

DAY OF SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

Whether you are released after surgery or after an overnight stay in a recovery center or hospital, you will only be released to the care of a responsible adult. All of these instructions must be clear to the adult who will monitor your health and support you around the clock in the first 24 hours following surgery.

- Do not stand fully upright: Standing upright could affect your results . A walker may be used if you require assistance but is not recommended. A gentle bend only at the hips is all that is required. Ten degrees. Do not bend at the back as this will give you back-ache.
- Rest, but not bed rest. While rest is important in the early stages of healing, equally important is that you are ambulatory, meaning that you are walking under your own strength. If possible, spend 10 minutes every 2 hours engaged in light walking indoors as you recover.

- Recline, do not lie down. Avoid sitting upright in a chair. Always keep your back elevated. Do not bend forward or over and put your head below your heart. Do not squat.
- Good nutrition. Fluids are critical following surgery. Stick to non-carbonated, non-alcoholic, caffeine-free and green tea-free beverages including fruit juices and water, non-dairy milk and non-dairy yogurt drinks. You must consume at least 8 ounces of fluid every 2 hours. Stick with soft, bland, nutritious food for the first 24 hours.
- Take all medication, exactly as prescribed. Oral pain medication, antibiotics and other medications you are prescribed may include:
    - Antibiotic
    - Pain medication
    - Muscle Relaxant
    - Anti-nausea medication
    - Antibiotic ointment
- Change your incision dressings if you are instructed to do so. Your incisions may seep fluid and some blood after surgery. Keep dressings clean and dry. A gauze pad with peroxide is appropriate for cleansing incisions. Do not remove any steri-strips over your stitches. If necessary, apply gauze pads over your incisions. Replace any compressions garments over the gauze.
- If you have a drain placed in your incisions, carefully follow the instructions for drain care and record the amount of drained fluid on the Drain Care Instructions and Log. Make sure that the bulb connected to the drain is always compressed and has active suction. If the fluid in the drain bulb is over 50cc, empty it and recharge the bulb.
- Wear your compression garment or binder around the clock. Follow the instructions specifically, and only remove any compression to cleanse your incision or to empty any drains.
- Do not smoke. Smoking can greatly impair your safety prior to surgery and your ability to heal following surgery. You must not smoke.
- Relax. Do not engage in any stressful activities. Do not lift, push or pull anything. Take care of no one, and let others tend to you.

TWO to SEVEN DAYS FOLLOWING SURGERY

During this time, you will progress with each day that passes. Ease into your daily activities. You will receive clearance to begin driving or return to work at your post-operative visit, or within 10 days.

Your post-operative visit will be made when you are discharged from the hospital.

- Continue to cleanse wounds as directed; you may shower when directed. Take a tepid, not a hot shower. Do not take baths. Limit your shower to 10 minutes. Avoid getting your incisions wet. Do not remove any steri-strips. Do not rub your incisions. Do not apply moisturizer to the surrounding skin.
- Take antibiotic medications and supplements as directed. Take pain medication as needed. You may wish to switch from prescriptive pain medication to acetaminophen.
- Continue to wear your compression garment or binder as directed or as tolerated. discuss with Dr. Kirwan.
- Ease into an upright position. You may slowly begin to stand straighter each day as the tummy region continues to heal.
- Begin Zimmer ZWave therapy if indicated. This can help soften any firmness or contour irregularities. Dr Kirwan will tell you when these treatments can be administered. Usually not until 3 weeks after surgery.
- Do not resume any exercise other than regular walking. Walking is essential every day, to prevent the formation of blood clots.

- No sun exposure. If you plan to go outdoors for any reason, wear protective clothing. Avoid any direct sun exposure on the incisions.
- Maintain a healthy diet. Do not smoke. Do not consume alcohol.

ONE to FOUR WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY
As you resume your normal daily activities, you must continue proper care and healing.

- Continue your wound care as directed.
- Refrain from weight-bearing or abdominal crunching exercises. Continue walking. A daily, 20-minute walk is recommended after two weeks.
- Do not smoke. While incisions may have sealed, smoking deprives your body of necessary oxygen that can result in poor healing and wide, raised scars.
- Continue to wear your compression garment and binder as directed.
- Practice good sun protection. Do not expose your abdomen to direct sunlight. If you are outdoors, apply at least an SPF 30 to the abdomen at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure and wear protective clothing. The skin of your abdomen is highly susceptible to sunburn or the formation of irregular, darkened pigmentation.

SIX WEEKS FOLLOWING SURGERY
Healing will progress and your abdominal swelling continues to decrease.

- You may ease into your regular fitness routine. Avoid any stomach or core exercises. Avoid heavy lifting that will strain your abdominal muscle repair. Your body may require some time to return to prior strength.
- Discomfort or tightness and tingling of the skin will continue to improve.
- No need to resume smoking. You have now gone 10 weeks (4 weeks prior to surgery and 6 weeks following) without a cigarette. For your long-term health, there is no need to resume smoking.

YOUR FIRST YEAR
- Continue healthy nutrition, fitness and sun protection.
- Your scars will continue to heal. If they become raised, red or thickened, or appear to widen, contact our office.
- Early intervention is important to achieving well-healed scars. Scars usually mature to fine incision lines one year after surgery.
- Three-month, six-month and one-year post surgery follow-up appointments are recommended. However, you may call our office at any time with your concerns or for needed follow-up.

Your body will change with age. Although the outcomes of a lower body lift are generally permanent, any significant weight gain or loss, pregnancy as well as the normal effects of aging can cause changes. Contact our office at 203-838-8844 with any of your questions or concerns, at any time.