

CENTER FOR PLASTIC & COSMETIC SURGERY
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TUMMY TUCK (Abdominoplasty)

You are about to undergo an abdominoplasty procedure. The following is an instruction sheet to help guide you through your recovery. Doctor Fedele strives to educate each patient thoroughly about their procedure and what to expect during their recovery. The staff at the Center for Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery are here to help and provide a supportive environment in which to ask questions or address concerns that might arise. Please review the following instruction sheet and write down any questions that you may have. Doctor Fedele and his staff want to make sure that you are comfortable with the procedure and have all of your questions answered.

PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

This procedure lasts approximately 2-1/2 hours. You will spend about 1-1/2 hours in the recovery room. You will be discharged home when stable. Or you have the option to stay overnight.

You must have someone drive you home and stay with you during the first 24-hours following the surgery.

Do not take aspirin or aspirin products (Ibuprofen, Vitamin-E or herbals) for 4 weeks prior to the surgery.

If you are a smoker, you should stop smoking at least 4 weeks prior to the surgery and for 4 weeks after the surgery. Please note: Smoking increases your risk for infection, scarring, delayed healing or skin loss and wound healing problems as well as an increased risk of anesthesia.

Doctor Fedele can have your prescriptions for you prior to your surgery so that you can get them filled before the day of your surgery. This will make it easier for you immediately following the surgery and save any running around to fill prescriptions after your surgery.

DAY OF SURGERY EXPECTATIONS:

Discomfort after the surgery is controlled with pain medication and a muscle relaxant. Narcotic pain medications can sometimes cause constipation. An over-the-counter stool softener (Colace) is recommended if you are prone to this or if you are experiencing this. Some nausea is normal in the first 24-48 hours following surgery. The surgery center can give you something prior to leaving. However, if you continue to experience nausea or vomiting, please contact the office to obtain a prescription for anti-nausea medication. You must wear a post-operative abdominal binder that will help support your abdomen. You must wear this 24 hours a day for the first two weeks and then only during the day in the second 2 weeks (for a total of 4 weeks).

The white Band-Aid strips called steri-strips, along the incision, can remain in place until they peel off or until your first postoperative visit.

Apply a thin layer of antibiotic ointment around the belly button twice daily.

Any other dressing on the operative site should be changed within the first day.

RECOVERY EXPECTATIONS

Week 1

Do not sit up directly from a reclining position when getting out of bed. Turn on to your side, slide your legs out of bed and then use your arms to push yourself upright.

No driving, lifting or strenuous activity until instructed to do so by Dr. Fedele.

Sponge bathe only while your drains are in place. Do not tub bathe. You may shower after your drains are removed.

You may likely be discharged with one or more drains. Record the amount that you empty every 4 hours or when 1/3 full. Total the output for each drain individually in cc's (or ml's) for each 24-hour period on the drainage record sheet. We will need to know this amount to be able to remove them. The drainage can vary in color from yellowish to red.

Wear your abdominal binder day and night. Keep it snug. This reduces bruising and prevents fluid from accumulating on your stomach.

It is best to sleep on your back with your head slightly elevated with a couple of pillows under your head and knees (recliner chair position). This will give you better support and takes the tension off of your stomach.

Make an appointment with our office within the first week. At that time, we may remove some stitches, possibly the drains and give you further instructions.

Week 2 and Beyond

Expect bruising and swelling for several weeks. The swelling however can last even up to 3 to 6 months.

You may likely begin normal activities by the end of the first week or beginning of the second week.

Walking is okay within the first 2 weeks; exercise after 4 weeks.

You may experience spasm type discomfort. A muscle relaxant will be prescribed to help improve comfort level.

You can expect numbness from your bellybutton to your incision following surgery. This can last several weeks to several months or it may remain numb.

Once your drains are removed fluid can leak from the drain holes. This can occur when walking or rolling over in bed and can saturate your clothes and linens. This is normal.

Scarring will continue to fade for up to two years.

PRECAUTIONS

If you have any questions or are unsure of your postoperative recovery, please call the office for instructions. If you experience any of the following, please call the office immediately and have the answering service contact Dr. Fedele: extreme pain, significant swelling of the lower abdomen causing significant discomfort, fever, chills, or a "hot-to-touch" sensation, significant redness.