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After Breast Lift Surgery

You should be up walking with assistance on the evening of surgery and as much as possible daily thereafter. Try to ambulate each hour while awake. Do not spend hours at a time lying or sitting and avoid crossing your legs at all times. These practices will minimize the chance of developing blood clots in the legs (deep venous thrombosis or DVT), a potentially very serious condition.

The breasts will be swollen for at least a month. The amount of bruising is usually minor but variable. It generally subsides after two weeks. It is also normal for the nipples and lower portion of the breasts to feel either numb or sometimes hypersensitive. This will eventually resolve but it may take many months. Incisions usually have “dissolvable” sutures

Continue to take the Arnica and Bromelain for two weeks. Do not take drugs on your “Medications to Avoid” list for two weeks. Remember not to smoke at all for at least three weeks although abstaining for six weeks is optimal. Begin taking your antibiotic when you get home from surgery and continue as directed for one week. Take your prescription pain medication every four to six hours as needed.

Gauze dressings and a surgical bra will be placed at the conclusion of surgery and should remain in place for forty-eight hours. At that time you may shower if you wish. Remove the bra and all gauze dressings from the breasts prior to showering. You may take a bath after two weeks provided all incisions are completely healed. Flesh-colored tapes or “steri-strips” placed around the areola should be left on for two weeks. They can get wet in the shower. If they fall off early they do not need to be replaced. After showering gently dry the breasts without rubbing. Do not use any creams, moisturizers, or powder on the breasts for the first week. After showering place sterile gauze over any breast incisions that come into contact with the bra. If the nipples are sensitive you may wish to cover them as well. You do not need to tape the gauze in place. The bra will hold it securely.

The surgical bra placed at the time of surgery should be worn 24 hours a day for one week. It should be removed only for showering. If you had a “lollipop” incision breast lift you may begin wearing an underwire bra after the first week. The bra should have a slightly tight fit. It can be removed for showering, but otherwise should be worn continuously for six weeks.

The surgical incisions are usually thin at first, become somewhat thicker and red for up to six months, and then begin to fade. It takes at least one year before final scar quality is established, and sometimes longer. Using vitamin E or any other substance on incisions has not proven to be beneficial.

Driving, flying, and return to work are permitted after one week. After one week, you may sleep on your side as long as you have the bra on. Do not lie on your stomach for at least three months. Sexual relations should be deferred for two weeks. When bending down, bend at the knees to minimize pressure on the incisions. Movement of the upper body should be minimized for the first two weeks after surgery. Avoid strenuous pushing or pulling with your arms such as opening heavy doors or lifting packages. Do not lift anything heavier than five to ten pounds for two weeks. Raise your hands carefully above your head when washing or brushing your hair.

After two weeks you may gradually resume light exercise that does not involve the upper body. An exercise bike is ideal. Light weight lifting for the lower body or arms (biceps and triceps only) is also permitted after two weeks. Heavier weight lifting and more strenuous cardiovascular exercise such as swimming or jogging are permitted six weeks after surgery. Upper body weight lifting focusing on the shoulders or pectoralis muscles should be avoided for at least two months.

Suggested Stores for Bras

Underneath It All
444 East 75th Street
New York, NY
212-717-1976

Intimacy
1252 Madison Avenue (at of 90th St.)
New York, NY 10128
212-860-8366

Livi's
1456 Third Avenue (82nd - 83rd St.)
New York, NY
212-879-2050

Mary's Corsetiere
930 Woodbury Road
Woodbury, NY
516-921-4033