



## General Post-Operative Instructions

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*Your guide to a smooth and confident recovery*

Nursing phone number: 437-494-3536

*Outside of business hours, texting is available on the nursing line. For emergencies, please go to your nearest emergency room.*

**Your first Follow-up appointment is scheduled for:**

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### Overview

The following after-care information is designed to make your recovery safe, comfortable, and uneventful. Please read these instructions carefully before and after your procedure. If anything is unclear, contact our office — our team is here to support you every step of the way.

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### Dressings & Wound Care

- Keep your dressings **clean and dry for the first 3 days** after surgery.
- After 3 days, you may shower normally over **water-resistant plastic dressings**.
- Remove any **cloth bandages**, but **keep steri-strips** in place until your first post-operative appointment.
- Steri-strips will loosen and lift off on their own; by **2 weeks**, all tape should be removed.
- All stitches are internal and dissolve on their own. If a small knot remains visible after 2 weeks, you may trim it gently at skin level with clean scissors.
- If a small area drains clear or yellow fluid, wash with mild soap and water twice daily, apply **Polysporin**, and cover with a light dressing.
- If you have drains, please follow your specific home-care instructions. **Do not shower** until 24 hours after drains have been removed.

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### Fat Grafting

- Expect some **bruising and swelling** at both donor and recipient sites.
- One week post-surgery, begin gentle **circular massage** of donor areas with Bio-Oil or a moisturizer.
- Massage of recipient sites can begin **4 weeks post-surgery**.

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### Pain & Medication

- Most patients are pleasantly surprised by how mild their discomfort is.
- You may be prescribed:
  - **Tylenol Extra Strength** – every 6 hours
  - **Celebrex (Celecoxib)** – every 12 hours
  - **Hydromorphone** – as needed (no more often than every 6 hours)



- Take Tylenol and Celebrex regularly for baseline control; use Hydromorphone only if required.
  - All narcotics can cause **constipation**. To prevent this, consider:
    - **Colace 200 mg twice daily**
    - **Milk of Magnesia 15–30 cc at bedtime**
    - Drink plenty of fluids and eat fruits high in fiber.
  - You may stop pain medication once you are comfortable.
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#### Diet & Hydration

- After anesthesia, start with **clear fluids** (water, tea, apple juice).
  - Advance to light foods such as soup and crackers. A normal diet is usually possible by the next day.
  - If nausea persists, **Gravol** may be used as directed.
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#### Bruising & Arnica

- Bruising and mild asymmetry are normal and resolve within 2–3 weeks.
  - **Arnica** can reduce bruising:
    - **Oral pellets**: begin 2 days before surgery, continue 3–5 days post-op.
    - **Topical gel**: begin once gentle massage is comfortable; apply **around (not on)** incisions until healed.
  - Avoid Arnica if you have a **daisy allergy**.
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#### Fever & Infection

- A low-grade fever ( $\leq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) the day after surgery is common and due to mild lung congestion. Take deep breaths and cough periodically.
  - Contact us if you experience **increasing redness, pain, swelling, foul odor, or drainage**.
  - If severe, proceed to the nearest emergency department.
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#### Scar Care & Massage

- Once steri-strips are off (10–14 days), begin **gentle scar massage** twice daily with your recommended **scar gel**.
  - After one week of gentle massage, increase to firmer circular motions.
  - Continue for at least **3 months** to soften and flatten scars.
  - Avoid **tanning or sun exposure** for **4 months** to prevent darkening.
  - **Silicone sheeting** (e.g., Scar Away, Cica-Care) may be used if redness or thickness persists beyond 6 weeks.
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#### Mobility & Activity

- Begin **light walking** the day after surgery; avoid prolonged bed rest.



- No heavy lifting or stretching for 2 weeks.
- Return to normal daily activities by 4–5 weeks.
- Exercise can usually resume at 8 weeks — start slowly.
- Do not drive if you are taking narcotics, fatigued, or unable to move comfortably.

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### Emotional Recovery

It's normal to feel emotionally low in the first days after surgery. Fatigue, swelling, and temporary changes in appearance can affect your mood. This is a normal part of recovery and will improve as healing progresses and results become visible.

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### When to Contact Us

Please contact **Aspect Plastic Surgery** if you experience:

- Pain not controlled by medication
- Rapid swelling or firm, enlarging lump (possible hematoma)
- Redness, warmth, or purulent discharge at the incision
- Fever > 38 °C
- Shortness of breath, calf pain, or chest pain

If urgent and our office is closed, please go to **North York General Hospital Emergency Department** or your nearest emergency facility.

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