



NORTH YORK GENERAL

Post Op Instructions

Oncoplastic Lumpectomy Based Breast Reconstruction

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Postoperative Dressing & Support

- At the end of your surgery, your incisions will be covered with sterile dressings, possibly including steri-strips (white tapes).
- You may be wrapped with a supportive elastic tensor bandage or garment to support your breast. Please do not remove or try to peak at your results.
- This dressing should remain in place for approximately 3 days. After 3 days, carefully remove the bandage and any gauze.
- The steri-strips should be left on the incisions; they will gradually loosen and fall off over 1-2 weeks.
- During this period, you may shower gently using soap and water. Do not submerge the wound in water (pools, hot tubs, baths).
- Once the dressings and tape come off, if necessary, you will be advised on scar care.
- If you are NOT in a tensor wrap and in a bra or Tegaderm dressing, please keep everything intact until your first follow up
- Wear a supportive sports type bra (nowires) during the day and at night after your first follow up and continue with this support for 4 weeks.
- If you have drains they will be removed likely at your first follow up
- Typically we avoid making a CCAC referral for this as you can manage and record the outputs on your own and it avoids a needless trip to the centre during your recovery
- If you need or require a CCAC referral we can make one on your behalf

Wound & Incision Care

- Occasionally, small amounts of blood or fluid may seep onto the steri-strips. This is normal.
- For bleeding that leaks under the tape, apply a clean gauze dressing. If bleeding persists, contact us immediately.
- All sutures are underneath the skin and do not need removal. Any visible knot will dissolve over time.
- If a stitch or knot remains after 2 weeks, you may carefully cut it with sterile scissors. Just a small tug on the loop of suture and cut at the base of the knot like a piece of hair.



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Pain Management

- You have been prescribed **Tylenol Extra Strength**, **Celebrex (Celecoxib)**, and **Hydromorphone**.
- Take Tylenol regularly, every 6 hours. Celebrex should be taken every 12 hours, and Hydromorphone as needed, but no more than every 6 hours.
- These medications are effective for managing postoperative pain; discontinue them once discomfort subsides.
- All pain meds can cause constipation. To prevent this, consider using **Colace** twice daily and an OTC laxative such as **Milk of Magnesia** if needed.
- Stay well-hydrated and eat high-fiber foods.

Eating After Surgery

- You may experience nausea from anesthesia. Start with clear fluids (apple juice, tea, soda).
- Gradually advance to light foods like broth, crackers, or toast, then to your regular diet as tolerated, usually by the next day.
- If nausea persists, over-the-counter anti-nausea remedies such as **Gravol** can be used, with your doctor's guidance.

Potential Complications & Warning Signs

- **Hematoma:** A swelling that develops within 24-48 hours, causing pain and firmness. This may require urgent evaluation and possibly drainage.
- **Bruising:** Expect some discoloration, which is normal and usually subsides within two weeks. Some bruising can last longer or appear to spread as it resolves.
- **Infection:** Signs include increasing redness, warmth, swelling, foul-smelling drainage, or persistent fever. Contact us immediately if these occur; antibiotics or further treatment may be necessary.
- **Fever:** Mild fever (up to 37.8°C) is common after anesthesia. Maintain deep breathing and coughing to prevent lung congestion. Reach out if fever persists or worsens.
- **Wound issues:** Signs of wound breaking down, necrosis, or unexpected wound opening should be reported immediately, as these may require additional treatment.
- **If your wound issues are significant and necrosis from your lumpectomy or reduction is present and compromising skin or nipple viability.** A referral to HBOT(hyperbaric oxygen therapy) will be made and this may require a visit to their clinic once a day for a few weeks.

Scar & Skin Care

- **Scar healing:**
 - Scars initially appear red and thick but typically soften and fade over 9-12 months.
 - After your dressings are removed, a silicone scar gel or sheets can be used to improve scar appearance.
- **Sun exposure & tanning:**
 - Avoid sun over scars for at least four months to prevent permanent hyperpigmentation.



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- Use high-SPF sunscreen if exposure is unavoidable.

Mobility & Activity

- You are encouraged to get up and walk early to promote circulation and reduce blood clots, starting the day of surgery.
- Prolonged bed rest is discouraged due to risk of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) and pulmonary embolism.
- Avoid heavy lifting, vigorous exercise, and raising your arms above shoulder level on the operated side for **at least 4 weeks**.
- **Sleeping position:**
Sleep on your back or unaffected side.
- **Physical activity:**
Gentle walking and light activities can be resumed early, but avoid strenuous or high-impact exercise until cleared, typically after 4 weeks.

Contralateral Breast & Additional Procedures

- **If you had a contralateral reduction or liposuction contouring:**
 - Please monitor for **persistent swelling, unusual firmness, or changes in shape or size** of the contralateral breast.
 - Some asymmetry or swelling is normal initially; however, notify your surgeon if you notice significant or worsening differences.
 - Be alert for signs of infection, redness, or warmth on the contralateral side, and report any concerning symptoms immediately.
 - Your surgeon will follow the healing process during routine check-ups and advise on any further procedures if needed to maintain symmetry.

Follow-Up & Long-Term Care

- Attend all scheduled follow-up appointments for wound healing, oncologic surveillance, and aesthetic assessment.
- Continue to monitor for any changes in breast shape, sensation, or signs of complications.



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When to Call the Office

Please contact us immediately if you experience any of the following:

- Increased swelling, pain, or change in color or appearance of the reconstructed breast(s)
- Sudden or worsening swelling of the chest
- Redness that extends beyond the incision sites
- Severe pain that is not relieved by prescribed medications
- Fever over **38°C (100.4°F)** or **101°F**
- Any signs of infection, significant wound drainage, or unusual symptoms
- Persistent or worsening numbness or tingling

For urgent concerns after hours or on weekends, please proceed directly to **NYGH Emergency**. We advise against visiting other emergency departments unless necessary, as care there may be against our recommendations and could delay your recovery.