

K. Cary Canoun MD, FACS

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ARM LIFT (BRACHIOPLASTY) POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

1. You must have a responsible adult drive you home after surgery. Because brachioplasty is a major operation done on an outpatient basis, it is very important that you have a responsible person available to assist you for the first days after surgery. **It is mandatory that you have someone stay with you for at least the first 24 hours after surgery.**
2. A light diet is best for the day following surgery. Start with fluids and progress to foods slowly. Drink plenty of fluids.
3. You may go to the bathroom with assistance as needed. Rest for the first 24 hours but move your legs around frequently. Take it easy and do not do any lifting or strenuous exercise for 4 weeks after surgery. Do not drive until you are no longer taking your pain medication and have good lower body coordination, about 7-10 days for most people. You will have to take sponge baths for the first week after surgery.
4. Medications will be prescribed the day of surgery. You will be given pain medication and an antibiotic. Take medications according to the instructions. If the pain medications make you drowsy, have someone give you the medications at the proper intervals. This will avoid you taking them too often. Pain medications can cause constipation. If you feel you are getting constipated, take a gentle laxative or stool softener.
5. The period of greatest discomfort does not usually last more than 48-72 hours. Thereafter, you may find you need your pain medication less frequently. It is normal to have some pulling and pinching sensations for weeks and sometimes months following surgery. The surgical scar may become hard and feel numb. This is scar tissue and part of the healing process.
6. Yours arms will be wrapped with ace wraps. These should be snug but not tight. They should stay in place until you are seen in the office.
8. You may drains placed to remove the fluid that is expected to accumulate following this type of surgery. You must empty the drain every 12 hours and record the output for each drain. After you empty the drain, you need to squeeze the bulb container flat prior to closing the drain. This will keep suction on the drain. You will need to keep the drain wound clean and covered. The drains are usually removed 1 week following surgery.

You can expect the following:

1. Moderate discomfort – use pain medication as prescribed. No Aspirin or Motrin.
2. Moderate swelling of the arms and hands.

Call me if you have any of the following:

1. Severe pain not responding to the pain medication.
2. Marked swelling or more swelling on one side than the other.
3. Any other questions or concerns.

Follow-Up Office Visits:

1st Visit: 5 days after surgery

2nd Visit: 14 days after surgery.

3rd Visit 2-4 weeks after surgery.

First Post-op Visit: Date _____ Time _____

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