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Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

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Tummy Tuck Post-Operative Instructions

1. **Activity:** Bed rest, up to bathroom only for first evening. Walking and sitting up are encouraged from day 2-5. Gradual increase to regular exercise by 2 weeks.
2. **Diet:** It is important to take plenty of fluids during the postoperative period to replace the amount that the operated tissues remove from the general circulation with swelling and edema. Gatorade is an excellent fluid replacement since it also replaces some lost electrolytes.
3. **Care of Operated Site:** Wear elastic garment all the times for 5 days, and then for 18 hours a day for 5 more weeks, or as instructed by your physician. These general guidelines will vary with each procedure. The garment may be removed for bathing after 72 hours. Massage area with moisturizing lotion such as Vaseline Intensive Care, Keri Lotion, or mineral oil. Massage will begin 12 days postoperatively and can be explained to you by your office nurse.
4. **Miscellaneous:**
No alcohol for 24 hours or while taking pain medication.
No driving until sutures are removed (5-6 days).

Call Dr. Waters if:

You are unable to drink liquids in the morning because of nausea.

You are unable to urinate eight hours after your surgery.

Your temperature is greater than 101.5.

You have sudden shortness of breath.

Marked dizziness occurs.

Increase of pain, redness, or streaking.

Your extremities begin to feel loose or become cold.

Significant swelling occurs.

You have heavy bleeding.

Please go to the emergency room if you feel you need to be seen immediately.

5. **Expectations:** Bruising of the treated area is expected, variable in degree and sometimes quite extensive. Expect to be stiff, tired, and uncomfortable for 1-2 weeks after surgery. Complete contour change will not be present until approximately 3 months.
6. **Scarring:** As with most surgeries, approximately 12 months will be required to evaluate the final scars and result. Operative wounds tend to become firm in the first few weeks to months and then soften with maturation of underlying scar tissue. Over 2-6 months, the numbness in the area will gradually improve. Irregularities may improve during this interval also. You are able to be evaluated at 6 months to appraise your result and to determine the possibility of any touch up work.
7. **Contact Information:**
Office (650)328-9646
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