

## Post-op Instructions

<http://elisabethrippy.ypo.pw/post-op-instructions.html>

### **Medication**

Complete the course of antibiotics, if prescribed. Take painkillers only as directed. Please do not add in any pain medication you have at home unless otherwise directed.

### **Wound Care**

Your wound is closed with dissolvable sutures that do not need to be removed. The dressing is waterproof and you can shower with in place. The dressing will stay in place until you are seen in clinic.

After your surgery, you may feel a lump or ridge in the breast. This is part of the normal healing process and may take up to 3 months to settle.

If your wound becomes red or you develop temperature, please contact your surgeon or GP as soon as possible.

### **Drains**

You may go home with a drain in place. The drain keeps fluid from building up in your wound by emptying into a bottle which will be kept in a handbag that you can wear over your shoulder. It will be removed by the nurse when it has stopped draining. The nurse will visit you daily and remove the drain at the appropriate time. If the drain is removed when you are in hospital and you collect fluid in your wound (seroma), please do not worry. The fluid is normal and will be absorbed with time.

### **Activities**

- You should restrict vigorous activities for 2 weeks.
- Restrict arm movements above shoulder (90 degree) for 2 weeks.
- You can drive after 2 weeks or when you have seen your surgeon.
- You should wear a comfortable non-underwire bra for the first 2 weeks after your surgery.
- Please do not swim or soak your wound in water for 3 weeks after your surgery

### **Swelling**

Swelling is a common complaint after breast surgery. For the most part, it is unavoidable. Remember that your body has been through major trauma with surgery.

An indicator of swelling is when a seam on your bra leaves a far deeper mark than just 'sheet marks' from simply wearing them. These deeper marks take a lot longer to vanish. Typically, sheet marks will vanish with a shower.

### **Swimming**

Swimming after your surgery can be very dangerous and put your health at risk. After surgery, you can have microscopic size open areas that you are not even aware of that can allow bacteria to enter your fresh incision lines. Infection likes to have a warm, moist, dark environment in which to grow. These bacteria can start to grow the instant it enters your body. A wet swimsuit can harbor bacteria too.

### **Physiotherapy**

Depending on your type of surgery, you may be seen by the physiotherapist before discharge and given an exercise program to practice at home. If you are unsure of what you can do or if you have a shoulder problem, please ask to see a physiotherapist.

### **Additional Information**

- Follow up as arranged by your surgeon. Should you have any questions, please contact your surgeon or your breast care nurse.
- By law you are not permitted to drive within 24 hours after an anesthetic or sedation.
- You should be accompanied by a relative or friend from day surgery to home and it is strongly advised that an adult stay with you overnight following discharge.
- You should not operate machinery, schedule any important meetings or sign legal papers for 24 hours.