

What to expect...

Your first month following breast reduction

Once the dressings are removed following your breast reduction surgery, you will notice many positive changes.

The first month following your surgery is when the most significant healing takes place. Your incisions heal quickly and by the end of the month, are strong enough to hold you together like normal. During this time it is very important to relax and avoid exercise activity to allow your breasts to heal quickly and event free.

During the first month, try to...

- Avoid exercising and excessive movement of your breasts including sports, going to the gym, yoga, going for walks, etc
- Avoid repetitive movements of your arms and upper body
- Relax as much as you can
- Continue with your normal daily activities including light housework
- Continue caring for your children as per your normal routine

Your breast incisions

During the first week or two following your surgery it is normal for your incisions to occasional bleed or drain small amounts of yellowish fluid. For this reason, it is wise to keep a light dressing in your bra to absorb this fluid and protect your clothes.

Near the end of the first month, you may notice small sutures poking through the incisions. While all your sutures are absorbable and will dissolve by themselves, your body occasionally will spit them out. This is normal. The small ends, while they can be bothersome, will fall out by themselves. If the suture ends are associated with a small amount of redness in the incision, simply keep the area clean and apply an antibiotic cream like Polysporin once or twice a day until this heals. This is a minor issue and will heal by itself.

The tapes on your incisions (Steri-strips)

The tapes on your incisions are applied at the end of your surgery and you'll see them after your dressing is removed. In order to keep them in place, a type of skin glue (Mastisol) is used. You will remove them 1 week after your dressing is removed. During your shower, apply soap to your breasts and after a few minutes, the tapes are easily removed. The tapes will not fall off by themselves. You must remove them.

Pain and Discomfort

Once the dressings are removed, the amount of pain and discomfort will be much less than following your surgery. Most patients are taking only the occasional Tylenol at this time.

Bandages

Wear a bra daily to minimise the amount of movement of your breasts during your daily activities. To protect your clothing from the occasional discharge or spot bleeding, put a light dressing inside your bra. You may purchase dressings from your pharmacy but thin deodorant pads or even folded paper towels (Scott towels) can be used as well. Continue to put dressings inside your bra until your incisions have completely healed. It is normal to have small amounts of red, pink or yellow discharge for the first few weeks following surgery.

Breast Healing

During the first month following your incisions, it is normal for your breasts will heal differently. Often one is more swollen, more painful, more bruised than the other. Firmness within your breasts is also normal and usually resolves slowly over weeks to months following your surgery. A small opening may occur along your incision and this will heal by itself by keeping the area clean and applying an antibiotic ointment daily (eg Polyporin).

Sleeping

Once your dressing is removed, you can return to your normal sleeping habits as long as it is comfortable. While patients can sleep on their sides or stomachs within a week or two, others find that a month or two healing is required before they can sleep in any position they desire.

Sensation

It is normal for the area around the nipple and lower breast to feel different after the surgery. It usually returns to normal in a few weeks to months, though in some patients can take much longer. During the first month following surgery there is nothing to do. Simply try and be patient.

Returning to work

Healing from breast reduction varies from patient to patient. The stress and strain of surgery can sometimes leave people feeling fatigued for several weeks. Most patients can usually get back to light work within 2 to 4 weeks. Other patients want to return to work as soon as possible and they are able to resume their working activities 3 to 4 days after their breast reduction.

How Long Until Full Recovery?

The breasts do not usually achieve their final shape immediately after surgery and may take up to six months for everything to settle down. The scars from breast reduction surgery are noticeable and permanent, and they can remain lumpy and red for months. Most scars will become less noticeable over time and may fade to thin white lines. The scars are limited to the lower part of the breast and therefore will not show under low-cut tops and bathing suits.

It may take a while to adjust to the new look. *Breast reduction surgery has the highest patient satisfaction rate of any of the cosmetic procedures. Nearly every woman who has this procedure is pleased with the outcome.*

If you have a problem

Please call my office at 514-933-3449 with any questions or concerns following your surgery.