

POST - OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Pain Management

- During the procedure local anaesthetic is injected into the operative site which should numb the area for 6-12 hours after your procedure.
- Upon discharge you may begin to feel some discomfort for which you may take:
 - Panadol/Panadeine/Panadeine Forte, 2 tablets every 6 hours regularly for the first 48-72 hours.
 - Anti-inflammatory e.g. Nurofen can be used in addition if required.
- If your pain is not controlled with the above measure contact WPRS for advice.

Wound Care

- Some patients will be discharged in a pressure garment – You are to wear this for 6 weeks. This is to support the breast and to minimise traction/movement in the wound and help reduce swelling.
- If you have a drain tube following your procedure, you will be educated on the monitoring of this by the ward staff before discharge. Hospital in the home or District nursing services will be arranged to assist you with management.
- Your dressing is to stay on until review provided it remains dry. You are able to shower as the dressing is water proof. If you have concerns about your dressing please contact the clinic nurse to discuss before removing.
- Bruising and mild swelling can be expected sometimes around the wound but this should remain stable and improve in subsequent days.

Activity

- Gentle home activity is recommended for the first 2-4 weeks.
- Avoid heavy lifting, strenuous exercise or activity for 6 weeks.
- Avoid lifting your arm higher than your shoulder for the first 2-4 weeks. This can be overridden under the supervision of a physiotherapist/ Lymphoedema Specialist.
- Exercise your ankles and calves whilst in your recovery to minimise your risk for DVT. Ward staff will advise you on this prior to discharge.
- You can return to driving a car after 1-2 weeks, depending on your own comfort and ability.
- If you have had lymph nodes removed, you are at risk of developing lymphoedema. It is likely you have already had a pre op session with the physio team. If not they will be in contact to discuss your ongoing management.
- Remember to minimise your risk for lymphoedema by avoiding any trauma, injections/needles, blood pressure cuff's etc on the particular arm. This is for the rest of your life.

Follow-up

- Day 5-7 post procedure you will have a post-operative wound check with the WPRS nurse who will advise you on further wound care appointments and future scar management.
- WPRS staff will have attached an appointment card to this handout advising you of this. If you haven't received a card or appointment, please contact the WPRS rooms on (03) 5562 5330.

If you have any concerns please contact WPRS on (03) 5562 5330.

- Within clinic hours your call will be transferred to clinical nurse and managed appropriately.
- After hours you may leave a message or your call will be diverted to the on-call Surgeon.

In the unlikely event you are unable to contact staff at WPRS please call St John of God Hospital, Warrnambool on (03) 5564 0600.