

After your Brachioplasty

Instructions and Information from Dr. Dauwe

You will be drowsy following surgery- we have given you medications to help make you more comfortable. Expect to wake and doze on and off during the evening.

Your arms will feel tight, and you will be wearing an elastic support garment to hold the tissues flat to prevent fluid accumulation and provide support for your comfort. Tightness is a good feeling, however, if you notice numbness, tingling, swelling or color changes in your fingers, please call Dr. Dauwe immediately.

The morning following surgery, it is extremely important to begin moving around, even though your arms will feel stiff. Each time you move around, the discomfort decreases. Not moving not only causes stiffness and increases discomfort, but increases the risk of medical complications such as blood clots. *Do Not Worry- you will not damage anything by moving. All of your surgical areas have been reinforced to encourage early movement.*

After surgery you will have a small amount of gauze and tape over your incision. Leave this in place until returning home. You may remove the gauze, but leave the tape directly over your incision in place. This is to be left on for two weeks.

For the first 2-3 days following surgery, there may be a slight amount of drainage from your incision lines onto your dressing. If any drainage continues after your dressing is removed, simply place a small folded gauze pad with a small amount of paper tape over the area to avoid any drainage staining your clothing.

All of your "stitches" have been placed beneath the skin to avoid any marks on the skin. All will dissolve over a period of time. None of these need to be removed in the office.

The first day or two following surgery, try to get up and move around for short periods of time, several times a day. This will decrease your stiffness and discomfort much more rapidly, and speed your recovery. Don't try to perform any heavy exercise, heavy lifting, or other strenuous activity. It is normal to feel a bit tired following surgery- you will regain your strength over the next three to four days if you will increase your activity gradually.

It's not unusual to have some nausea following surgery, particularly if you begin to get up and move about too quickly. If this occurs, simply relax, and don't try to eat any heavy foods- just try clear liquids and work your way up to solids foods.

You have been given a prescription for pain medication. Please take a pill before bed the evening of surgery (preferably after you have kept something in your stomach to avoid stomach irritation). It's a good idea to take another pill the morning following surgery, since you may feel a bit stiff and uncomfortable when you begin to move about. If the pills disagree with you in any way, simply try Extra-Strength Tylenol. Discomfort following surgery is generally mild to moderate. This can last several days to 2 weeks following surgery. If you start to experience significant pain, please notify the office immediately.

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You received antibiotics in your IV prior to surgery and a prescription for after surgery. Infection following any type of plastic surgery is extremely rare. Infection is usually not apparent for several days following surgery. If you notice significantly increased redness or swelling accompanied by tenderness or fever at any time, call so that we may examine you. It's normal to experience temperature elevations to 101° F following surgery for many patients. If your temperature elevates about 102° F please notify our office immediately.

Avoid any type of exercise which elevates your heart rate over 100 for at least 3 weeks following surgery. Aerobic exercise elevates your blood pressure and can cause bleeding. Avoid straining or heavy lifting type activity for 6 weeks following surgery. Many patients find that the compression garment makes you more comfortable for the first few weeks following surgery. It is absolutely essential for the first 2 weeks following surgery that the garment be worn as close to 24 hours a day to prevent fluid accumulation. After that, you may wear or not wear it as you choose.

As we discussed prior to surgery, you will certainly have areas of your arms which will have decreased sensation. This is normal, and as the swelling subsides and the skin nerves regrow, your sensation will return.

Your incisions will feel firm for several weeks following surgery; this is part of the normal healing process. The scar firmness will soften over a period of months following surgery. Please do not apply any scar management creams until after it has been discussed with us.

Be patient with your tissues- they take time to recover after your surgery. You will notice areas of firmness, numbness and possible bulge spots for a few weeks after surgery. Don't worry- this is normal and will resolve as your tissues recover.

Remember that the degree of swelling will be different on the two sides- even if we have performed the exactly the same procedure. Don't worry about any differences between the sides for the first six weeks following surgery.

Please contact the office within 24 hours of returning home to update us of your process and set up your first follow up appointment.

If you have additional questions or should any problems arise, please contact the office immediately by phone at 214-821-6580