

Abdominoplasty (Tummy Tuck) Post-Operative Instructions

If you are in need of immediate assistance after hours, please go to the nearest emergency room. For general questions or need assistance that cannot wait until the next business day, you may call the answering service and they will get in contact with Dr. Rodrigues.

1. Please fill and pick up prescriptions and follow directions as prescribed by Dr. Rodrigues.
2. First post-operative appointments are usually made 7-10 days following surgery. Please call our office to schedule an appointment.
3. Surgical drains are placed at the time of surgery. Drains remove excess fluid from the abdomen that is created during the healing process. Please follow instructions given by the post-operative staff to drain the bulbs and record the output fluid amounts for each drain. Please bring this drain log to your post-operative visit. Drains will usually be in place for about 10-14 days depending on the drainage output. Each patient is different and some patients may have drains longer than the estimated time frame.
4. Compression garments should be worn at all times other than showering until your post-operative visit. Garments apply pressure to reduce swelling as well as contour the surgical site. Post-Operative garments are usually worn between 6-8 weeks depending on healing. Further instructions will be given by Dr. Rodrigues and/or his staff at additional follow up visits.
5. Showers are permitted 48 hours after surgery. Compression garments may be removed for showers, but should be applied after showering. Please be sure to dry the areas as well as possible. Garments may be put in the washing machine, but please do not place in the dryer as it may cause the garment to shrink. Surgical drains may get wet in the shower, but please be careful not to tug on the drain site. **DO NOT** immerse in bodies of water such as baths, swimming or hot tubs for 6 weeks following surgery. Bodies of water hold bacteria and can increase your risk of infection.
6. Please **DO NOT** use ice or heat to the surgical area. Surgical sites are desensitized during the surgical process. Application of ice or heat packs can potentially burn the skin.
7. Watch for bleeding, abnormal swelling, fever (temperature should be taken with a thermometer to determine a legitimate fever), chills, fainting, chest pain, or shortness of breath. If any of these should occur, contact Dr. Rodrigues.
8. No exercising, heavy lifting or heavy exertion for three weeks following surgery. This causes bleeding and can increase swelling.
9. **DO NOT** hold animals or allow animals to sleep with you for 2 weeks following surgery.
10. Smoking causes wound healing problems. It can cause significant breakdown of the incisions and also loss of skin. It is required for your own post-operative recovery that you do not smoke for two weeks following the surgery.
11. Do not get discouraged if you do not see the results you desire immediately. Each individual will heal at a different rate. It might take you more or less time than someone else to lose bruises and swelling. It may take as long as six months for all swelling to disappear, but you should notice the greatest results within eight weeks after surgery. Bruising and swelling also tend to follow gravity; the lower areas will show more swelling and bruising than upper body liposuction.

Please Note: These instructions are to be followed as a general guideline. Dr. Rodrigues will discuss with you the exact instructions he wishes you to follow after your individual surgery. If you have any questions, concerns, or need clarification of instructions, please feel free to call our office.