

# WEST COUNTY

## PLASTIC SURGEONS of Washington University

Patient Information for:

### *FAT GRAFTING*

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Surgery Scheduling Secretary/Dr. Tenenbaum – Carol – 314-996-3040  
Surgery Scheduling Secretary/Dr. Myckatyn – Michelle – 314-996-3028  
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Marilyn Bennett and Patty McCune

OR DAY/TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ PLACE: \_\_\_\_\_ ARRIVAL TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

During office hours, questions can be answered by our office staff at 314-996-8800. During off hours, please call Barnes hospital at 314-362-5000 and ask for the “Plastic Surgery Resident on call.”

Please note that our website ([www.westcountyplasticsurgeons.wustl.edu](http://www.westcountyplasticsurgeons.wustl.edu)) has detailed descriptions of most procedures. This form is available from our website by navigating to: Patient Resources > Patient Forms.

## BEFORE SURGERY

### SIX WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. **Smoking affects healing.** If possible, please try to stop smoking or using ANY nicotine products for at least 6 weeks before surgery and one month after. If needed, we can prescribe Chantix to help you quit.
2. **Good nutrition can help optimize wound healing and speed your recovery from plastic surgery.** To reduce the risk of problems, please be sure to consume a high protein diet and appropriately supplement any vitamin or dietary deficiencies that you may have.

### TWO WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Some medications can cause undesirable side effects that could affect your surgery. Please read over the enclosed “**Medication and Supplement Alert List**” and let us know if you take any of them. For example, **garlic** and **ginseng can cause bleeding** even though they are homeopathic remedies and not true medicines. So please stop taking these, and any other non-prescription herbal medicines for two weeks before surgery. Also, Aspirin should not be taken 2 weeks before or after surgery. Tylenol is a good medicine to take for any aches or pains you may have prior to your surgery.
2. If you develop a cold, facial sore, or any other illness prior to surgery, please notify us.
3. If you are having surgery in our office or as an outpatient, please be sure arrangements have been made for a responsible adult to drive you to and pick you up after surgery.

## EVENING BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Have some jello and/or soup available for after surgery.
2. Get a good night's rest.
3. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight if your surgery is scheduled before noon. Never eat or drink anything at all for at least 8 hours prior to surgery.

## DAY OF SURGERY

**Be at our Office or Hospital at:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do not eat or drink anything if your surgery is scheduled before noon. If your surgery is scheduled after noon, you may have coffee or tea and dry toast no later than 8 hours before your scheduled surgery time. **DO NOT SMOKE.**
2. Do not wear contact lenses, wigs, hairpins, hairpieces or jewelry. Dress in old, loose, comfortable clothes. Do not wear pullover tops or pantyhose. Remove all body piercing jewelry from all locations. Wear slip-on shoes.
3. Have someone drive you to your surgery and make certain someone will be available to take you home and stay with you for 24 hours. Put a pillow and blanket in the car for the trip home.

## AFTER SURGERY

1. **Supervision.** After surgery, it is important for you to have someone available to check on you or stay with you for the first 24-48 hours, as you may feel sore or weak.
2. **Diet.** A light diet is best for the day of surgery. If your procedure is performed under local anesthesia, you may start eating light meals a couple hours after surgery. If you had general anesthesia, begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or jello. You may start a regular diet the next day.
3. **Pain.** Most people experience muscle soreness as opposed to sharp pains for about 4-5 days after surgery. The pain medication we have prescribed should relieve your discomfort. You may take it every 4 hours as needed. It is best to take pain medication with crackers, jello, etc. Alcohol and pain medication should not be taken together.
4. **Activity.** It is important to refrain from any strenuous activities for at least 1 week after liposuction. Gradually work back up to pre-surgical activities after 1 to 2 weeks.
5. **Compression girdle.** The girdle must be worn over the area from where fat was harvested (the area where liposuction was performed – typically the abdomen, flanks, or thighs) **AT ALL TIMES** except showering for **FOUR WEEKS** and then as much as possible including at night for another **TWO WEEKS** for a **TOTAL OF SIX WEEKS**.

6. **Showering.** You may remove the girdle to take a shower. You can put the girdle in the washer and dryer while you are showering and then put it back on immediately. *If you wish you can purchase an extra girdle from our office.* They are also available through medical supply stores.
7. **Swelling and bruising** are a normal expectation following surgery. Bruising can be apparent for a couple of weeks and swelling for as long as 1-3 months afterward. The bruises and swelling will move down your body before being absorbed. *If redness begins to develop in the surgical site or spread from the incisions, or new redness develops after the swelling was already starting to go away, then contact our office or come to the ER for further evaluation.*
8. **Drainage.** You may experience drainage of blood-tinged serum or clear fluids for several days after your procedure from either the site that received liposuction or the site to where the fat was transferred. This is normal for up to 10 days after the procedure and can be controlled with gauze pads. *If the drainage starts up in a delayed fashion (wasn't happening at first but starts up 10 days or more later), continues on past 10 days (other than a few small spots that stain a gauze pad over several hours), or its character changes so it becomes thick, milky, or more bloody, please contact our office or come to the ER for further evaluation.*
9. **Gentle Massage** to the surgical sites including both the donor and recipient sites (areas from where fat was harvested and transferred to) will help increase circulation and alleviate the hardness felt underneath the skin. The massages can begin 2 weeks after surgery. Be particularly gentle over the site that was grafted.
10. **Altered Sensations After Surgery.** Some people experience an itching sensation and/or numbness following surgery. This will gradually subside over the next 2-3 months.

## RETURNING TO WORK:

1. Working from home : 1 week.
2. Desk job : 2 to 3 weeks
3. Up on your feet a lot : 3 weeks
4. Manual labor : 4 weeks

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. **Expectations.** Remember that you may require more than one session of fat grafting to optimally correct a contour problem. The result will never be perfect. It will take a few months for the swelling to go away and for some of the grafted fat to go away. Typically the remainder will stay indefinitely, but this volume can vary significantly but is usually around 50% of what was initially grafted. The quality and tightness of the surrounding tissues as well as the volume injected can affect the amount that may survive.

2. **Caring for the grafted area.** While you can gently massage the area that receives the fat graft, please do not put too much compression or pressure on it as this may reduce blood flow to the area and reduce fat graft take.
3. Strenuous activity/heavy lifting can be initiated as soon as you feel less swollen and up to it.
4. All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight during the healing phase. Direct sun contact is to be avoided and use a sunscreen with SPF 20 or greater for at least 6 months. Excellent sunscreen options are offered through our various skin care lines.
5. Please take all medications carefully and as directed.
6. If you have nausea, vomiting, rash shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medication, please call the office.
7. If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101°F / 38.5°C), redness or increased pain at the surgical incisions, please call us immediately.

## **FOLLOW-UP:**

Follow-up after surgery varies based on the extent of the procedure, any pre-existing health conditions you may have, how far away you live, and in the unusual event where there is a complication.

For many patients follow-up includes:

- a) Follow-up within 1 to 2 weeks with registered nurse or physician's assistant to check wounds, and to address any minor questions or concerns
- b) Physician follow-up at 3 weeks, 3 months and 1 year and to address any concerns

## **PRESCRIPTIONS:**

We will try to provide you with prescriptions for medicines prior to your surgical procedure. Usually this will include a pain medicine and an antibiotic.

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