

# WESTCOUNTRY

PLASTIC SURGEONS  
of Washington University

Patient Information for :

*LOWER BODY LIFT  
“BELT LIPECTOMY”*



Dr. Terence Myckatyn &  
Dr. Marissa Tenenbaum

Surgery Scheduling Secretary/Dr. Tenenbaum – Carol – 314-996-3040  
Surgery Scheduling Secretary/Dr. Myckatyn – Michelle – 314-996-3028  
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Nursing Staff – 314-996-3201  
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.** Please **stop smoking or 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 is critical to optimize wound healing and speed your recovery from plastic surgery after massive weight loss.** Depending on the weight loss procedure you had or diet that you followed, there is a risk of iron, calcium, vitamin A, B12, D, E, or K deficiencies. 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 interfere with anesthesia and 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. 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 as an outpatient, please be sure arrangements have been made for a responsible adult to drive you to and pick you up after surgery and to stay with you for the first 24 hours.

## EVENING BEFORE SURGERY:

1. Have some jello and/or soup available for after surgery. Stock the freezer and cupboards with easy meals so you won't have to shop or cook for a week.
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

**Arrive at the 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. To help us place your scar, please wear a favorite pair of underwear or bikini bottoms under your clothes. Depending on your operation and the garment we will attempt to conceal at least some of your scars within the covering of this garment. Do not wear contact lenses, wigs, hairpins, hairpieces or jewelry. Dress in old, loose, comfortable clothes overtop. 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. **Blood Clot Prevention.** To reduce the risk of blood clots after surgery you will be treated with a drug called *Lovanox*. This drug, also known as *low molecular weight heparin* is injected under the skin of the abdomen daily for at least 5 days after surgery. Before the operation is performed, and while you are in the hospital, you will also have specialized stockings on your lower legs that intermittently massage your ankles. These also reduce the risks of blood clots.

2. **Flexed Position.** You will need to keep flexed at the waist for as much as 2 weeks after surgery to take pressure off of the stitches on your abdomen. Remember that your incision goes the entire way around your torso, so don't bend forward too much as you can also pull the incision in the back. If it does not feel tight, then you can straighten up. Otherwise, maintain a flexed posture at your waist of about 10° until the pressure subsides. While in bed, sleeping in a recliner or pillows can help keep your waist gently flexed.
3. **Diet.** A light diet is best for the rest of the day after surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or jello. You may start a regular diet the next day. Please be sure to consume a diet rich in protein after surgery. This will encourage wound healing and may reduce your risk of post-operative seromas (collections of fluid that your drain tubes otherwise have to deal with).
4. **Pain Control after Surgery.** If you have pain or discomfort, take the pain medication every 4 hours. It is best to take pain medication with crackers, jello, etc. If you have no pain, do not take the medication. Alcohol and pain medication should not be taken together.
5. **Drains** may be used to draw off any accumulating fluid after surgery. Typically 4 drain tubes are placed for a lower body lift, and can last for 1 to 4 weeks. The bulb should be kept collapsed at all times. The fluid will need to be removed when the drain is no longer collapsed. Please keep a record of how much fluid is emptied from the bulb in milliliters over a 24 hour (day) period. Bring this daily record with you to the office appointment while any drains are still in. The drains will be removed when you have drained less than 30 cc within a 24 hour period.
6. **Incisions.** The wounds have likely been sealed with Dermabond or superglue no wound care except gentle cleaning is required. Do not use ointment or lotion over Dermabond glue.
7. **Showering.** You may shower 48 hours after surgery. The incisions can get soapy and wet, but avoid applying full showerhead pressure to them.
8. **Abdominal binder.** You should wear your provided surgical binder or compressive garment until the doctor states you may wear an alternative. Additional compressive garments can be purchased through our office or from a medical supply store if the original gets dirty.
9. **Dressings and Tape.** If supportive tape is used for your surgery, please continue to wear this until your first follow-up visit. Your doctor will remove this when appropriate. If it comes off in the meantime, please contact our office but do not replace it yourself.

## OTHER POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Activity.** You will be encouraged to walk the evening of your surgery, or the next morning. You should have a belt or waste strap to which you can pin or place your drain tubes so you do not tear them out or trip on them. At first you will be walking slightly flexed at the waste. Be careful to avoid any activity that causes pain or discomfort. Strenuous activities and exercises other than slow and then brisk walking are to be avoided for at least 5 to 6 weeks after surgery. At that point, you may perform non-impact aerobics like the elliptical, stairmaster, arc trainer, or stationary bike. Running, impact aerobics, and light upper body work can start after 6 weeks depending on your comfort level and the extent of your surgery. Do not exceed lifting 10 lbs with your upper body for at least 6 weeks. If it hurts, back off. Start slow and progress as tolerated. Call your doctor if you have any questions.
2. **Driving** may be resumed when a sharp turn of the steering wheel will not cause pain and when you are off regular narcotic pain medicine.
3. **Bruising and swelling of the pubic region.** You may notice some swelling or malposition of your pubic region. The pubic region can become swollen since the normal circulation and drainage to this area has been interrupted by your abdominal incision. Also, due to gravity, swelling is always the worst at the lowest part of a region. In the case of the trunk, that is your pubis. Finally, when your abdominal skin was redundant before surgery you may not have noticed, or focused on the positioning of your pubis. Now that the abdominal skin has “uncovered” the pubis this extra skin becomes more evident. We can reposition your pubis with a pubis lift at the same time as a body lift or later. This will help raise the pubis into better position but will not fully correct shape and may not improve swelling after surgery.
4. **Unusual sensations** like numbness, sharpness, and burning are common during the healing process. These sensations may last several months but will gradually disappear.
5. **Wound healing problems** and scar widening are more common with lower body lifts than other types of plastic surgery. Sutures may spit, and look somewhat like a pimple. The edges of the wound may separate slightly – this is most common in the center of either the front or back incision. Local wound care, as instructed by your surgeon, or additional scar care like silicone gel or sheeting may be recommended by your surgeon during follow-up visits.
6. If you have any questions, sudden onset of extreme pain, fever, or redness, please call Dr. Myckatyn or Dr. Tenenbaum’s office at (314) 996-8800.

## RETURNING TO WORK:

1. Working from home : 4 weeks
2. Desk job : 4 to 6 weeks
3. Up on your feet a lot : 6 weeks
4. Manual labor : 8 weeks

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. Strenuous activity/heavy lifting of objects greater than 10 lbs should be avoided for 6 weeks.
2. All incisions will be extremely sensitive to sunlight for one year. Direct sun contact is to be avoided and use a sunscreen with SPF 30 or greater for the first 6 months and at least SPF 15 for the next 6 months. Excellent sunscreen options are offered through our various skin care lines.
3. Please take all medication carefully and as directed.
4. If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call the office.
5. If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 101), redness or increased pain at the surgical incisions, please call us immediately.

## FOLLOW-UP (return visits):

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 with registered nurse or physician's assistant at 1 week and to address any minor questions or concerns
- b) physician follow-ups at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 3 and 6 months 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. Lovanox will be used to reduce your risk of a blood clot for at least 5 days after surgery.

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