

# Discharge Instructions for Lumpectomy or Breast Biopsy



You just had a procedure to remove a lump or a small piece of tissue from your breast. After surgery, be sure to have an adult drive you home. Ask your healthcare provider when you will get the results of the biopsy. Will they call you or will you talk about it at your next visit? Make a follow-up appointment as directed by your healthcare provider.

## What to expect

These are common after a lumpectomy or breast biopsy:

- Bruising and mild swelling around the incision
- Mild discomfort for a few days
- Feeling tired for a day or so
- Feeling anxious or down

## Diet

Here's what to eat and drink after a lumpectomy or breast biopsy:

- Start with liquids and light, easy-to-digest foods, such as bananas and dry toast. As you feel up to it, slowly return to your normal diet.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water or other nonalcoholic fluids a day, unless directed otherwise.

## Activity

What you can do after a lumpectomy or breast biopsy:

- After the procedure, take it easy for the rest of the day.
- If you had general anesthesia, don't use machinery or power tools, drink alcohol, or make any major decisions for at least the first 24 hours.
- You may shower and pat the cut (incision) dry, but don't soak in a tub until you see the healthcare provider again.
- Return to normal activities (including driving) after 24 hours.

## Bandage and incision care

To care for your incision site:

- Ask your healthcare provider how you should care for the dressing and when you can take it off.
- Take pain medicines as directed. Don't wait until the pain gets bad before taking them. Don't drink alcohol while on pain medicines.
- Place an ice pack over the bandaged incision for no longer than 20 minutes at a time. Do this as instructed by your healthcare provider. To make an ice pack, put ice cubes in a plastic bag that seals at the top. Wrap the bag in a clean, thin towel or cloth. Never put ice or an ice pack directly on your skin.

- Wear a comfortable, snug-fitting bra at all times, even to bed. This helps keep swelling down.
- If your incision has been closed with glue, don't apply lotion, ointment, or cream to the area. Doing so can cause the glue to dissolve.
- If strips of tape have been used to close your incision, don't pull them off. Let them fall off on their own.
- If you have a gauze bandage, keep it and the wound dry for 48 hours. If the gauze bandage gets wet, replace it with a clean, dry bandage.

## When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these:

- Vomiting or nausea that does not go away
- Fever of 100.4° F ( 38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Chills
- Fluid leaking from the incision that smells bad
- Pain not relieved by pain medicines
- Bleeding, warmth, redness, or hard swelling around the incision
- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Trouble urinating, blood in urine, pain when urinating, or urine that's cloudy or smells bad

Ask how to get help if you have problems or questions, including after office hours, on weekends, and on holidays.

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