

PATIENT INFORMATION

A publication of Jackson-Madison County General Hospital Surgical Services

Breast Reduction

You are scheduled to have a breast reduction. The purpose of this handout is to help you know how to prepare for this surgery and what to expect during your surgery.

It is the hope of the surgery staff that you will have a good experience while you are a patient in our hospital. **We are here to serve you!** Please feel free to ask any questions that you might have.

What is breast reduction surgery?

During breast reduction surgery, a portion of your breast tissue is removed to decrease the size of your breasts. The incision is made either at the nipple area or under the breast. This surgery is done:

- To treat various medical problems caused by large and/or heavy breasts.
- Because the breasts are of unequal size.
- Because of personal or cosmetic reasons.

What do I need to do before my surgery?

- Take a shower the night before surgery and the morning of your surgery. If you are given a special soap, use it with each shower.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery.
- Please do not chew gum. (This raises the level of acid in your stomach.)
- If you are taking medicine for your blood pressure, heart, or asthma you may take this with a small sip of water the morning of your surgery. If you take diabetes medicines and/or insulin, talk with your doctor about whether you should take them.
- You may brush your teeth and rinse your mouth as long as you do not swallow any water.
- Please remove all nail polish.
- Please remove all jewelry including body piercings.
- Do not wear makeup.
- On the day of your surgery:
 - Wear comfortable clothing that is loose fitting, easy to get into and that opens in the front.
 - Bring all medicines that you take to the hospital with you.
 - Do not bring anything valuable or large amounts of money with you to the hospital.
 - Have a responsible adult drive you to the hospital and stay during your surgery. **You will not be allowed to drive yourself home.**

What can I expect the day of my surgery?

- After you have been to the Admitting Office you will be taken to a room. This may not be the room where you will be taken after surgery.
- You will be given a hospital gown and asked to remove all of your clothes including underwear and socks. Put on the gown opening in the back.
- You will be asked questions about your medical history. Many of these will be the same questions that you have already been asked. Please know that we need to ask these again so that we can give you the best possible care.
- You may go to the Pre-Anesthesia Area (PAU) to get ready for your surgery, or you may get ready in your room. If you go to PAU, you will be there for about one to one and a half hours before your surgery.
- Your nurse will tell your family where to wait.
- You will have an IV (a needle in your arm for fluids) started. You will be given medicine to help you relax.
- If you are prepared for surgery in PAU, you will have sticky pads put on your chest so the staff can watch your heart. A blood pressure cuff will be put on your arm so that your blood pressure can be checked. A device called a pulse oximeter will be put on your finger. This will tell how much oxygen is in your blood. If you do not go to PAU before your surgery, these things will be done in the operating room.
- Someone from anesthesia (the person who will put you to sleep) will talk to you.
- Your entire chest will be shaved and washed.
- When your doctor is ready for you, you will be taken to the operating room. The room will be cold. You will be given a warm blanket.
- Your team in the operating room will include your doctor and his assistant, an anesthesiologist, a circulating nurse, and a scrub nurse. All of these people are there to take care of you and no one else.
- The anesthesiologist will place a mask over your face. This will give you plenty of oxygen to breathe. You will be given medicine in your IV that will relax you to the point of sleep. The anesthesiologist will give you medicine so that you will sleep through the operation and you will not wake up during the surgery.
- When the operation has started, the nurse will call your family. They will call your family at least every hour during the surgery. This surgery usually takes from three to five hours to complete.
- When the operation is over, the anesthesiologist will give you medicine that will help you to wake up. You will be taken to the Recovery Room.
- The doctor will talk with your family.
- You will stay in the Recovery Room for about one hour. You will have oxygen either in your nose or over your face. When you are able to take deep breaths this will be removed. There will be a nurse taking care of you. He or she will be watching your blood pressure, heart rate, and oxygen level.
- Your nurse will also check your bandage for any bleeding or other drainage. You will have on a special binder when you wake up. This will be tight. This is used to reduce the swelling and bruising.
- If you are in pain or feel sick to your stomach please let the nurse know so that you can be given medicine.

- When you are awake, you will be taken back to your room. There will be a nurse taking care of you. He or she will check you often.
- When you are fully awake and do not feel sick to your stomach you will be given something to eat and drink.
- Ask for help the first time that you try to get out of the bed. **Do not try to get up without help.**
- Most women are able to go home either the day of surgery or the following morning.

What should I do when I go home?

- Your doctor will give you guidelines to follow. Be sure to follow his or her instructions.
- Do not drive or operate machinery until your doctor says that you can.
- Your doctor will tell you when you can return to normal activity.
- Keep your bandages clean and dry.
- If steri-strips (thin strips of tape across the incision) are in place, allow them to remain in place until they fall off on their own.
- Do not lift anything heavier than a five-pound bag of potatoes until your doctor tells you that you can.
- Call the doctor if you have a fever above 100.5°F or 38°C twice or if you notice redness around your incisions.
- You will notice some swelling and bruising around the incision. This will go away in a few days.
- You will be sent home wearing a binder. Your doctor will tell you when you can remove the binder and begin wearing a bra.
- Call your doctor if you see any blood or other drainage from your incision.
- Please be sure to keep your follow-up appointment with your doctor.