

MICHAEL J. SUNDINE, M.D., F.A.C.S.
AESTHETIC PLASTIC SURGERY
Certified By The American Board of Plastic Surgery

**BRACHIOPLASTY (Arm Lift)
AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

After surgery, it is important for you to have someone available to stay with you for the first 24-48 hours, as you will be weak and drowsy. You may require help the first few times you get out of bed.

It is important to get out of bed early and often after your surgery (with assistance) to prevent postoperative problems. This activity will greatly reduce the risk of blood clots in your leg veins. Please take deep breaths frequently to keep your lungs clear (15-20 per hour). Keep your head elevated about 30 degrees (two pillows) with the knees slightly flexed.

It is important to walk and only lift your arms less than 90 degrees at the shoulder for the first 10-14 days to minimize tension on the suture line. Sleep with your arms on 2-3 pillows to minimize swelling. This will improve the quality of your scar.

A light diet is best after surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or Jell-O. You may start a regular diet the next day.

Please take the pain medication only if you have pain. Take it with crackers, Jell-O, etc. You should need it the first 2-3 days after surgery as prescribed. **Take the antibiotics as directed until they are completed. It is very important you take the antibiotics to prevent infection.**

DO NOT SMOKE. This is very important. Smoking causes vasoconstriction and impedes healing.

For the first 72 hours keep your arm movements to a minimum. Your arms should not be used to support your body or lift anything heavy. Do not push with your arms to lift yourself in bed. Keep your arms as close to your body as possible.

Frequently small drains are used to draw off any accumulating fluid after surgery. The bulb should be collapsed at all times. The fluid will need to be removed from the bulb every 3 hours. Please keep a record of what time and how much fluid is emptied from the bulb. Bring this record with you to the office appointment. Usually drains are removed 24 hours after surgery. The drains will not be removed if you have drained more than 30 cc within a 24-hour period.

Please wear your arm compression binder continuously for 14 days. You may take it off to shower on postoperative day 3. You will have Steri-strips in place. You may shower with these in place. Pat them gently with a towel to dry them and then replace the arm compression binder.

Do not drive for 7-10 days.

Do not submerge yourself in a bath, swimming pool, whirlpool, or ocean for 2 weeks.

You are recommended to use silicone gel sheeting on the incisions beginning two weeks after surgery.

Begin massage of the incision scars two weeks after the surgery. They can be massaged with vitamin E, aloe vera, or moisturizing cream. You may also purchase a cream to help minimize scarring, please ask our nurse if you are interested.

You may resume sexual activity in 4 weeks. (Raising your blood pressure for the first 10 days following surgery may cause bleeding)

Do not take ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin, or aspirin containing products for **3 weeks after surgery.**

Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs. for 3 weeks. It is good to walk for 15-20 minutes, 2-3 times per day. Do not run, lift weights, play tennis, or golf for 6 weeks. (Keep your heart rate under 100 for 3 weeks)

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY

Moderate swelling of your arms is to be expected. You may find that your clothes may not fit as easily as before. Be patient. The swelling will gradually subside and you will be back to normal in 3 to 6 months.

Because of the removal of tissue from your arms, there is a certain amount of tightness that is to be expected. This will slowly relax within 6 months.

Infrequently, after surgery, you may have fluid in the arms after the drains are removed. If this happens, please contact our office, as Dr. Sundine will want to see you to remove the fluid.

*Call our office if you have any questions, if any problems should arise, or if you have been having any signs or symptoms of infection (redness, fever, drainage). 949-706-3100 (Newport Beach Office).