

Tissue Expanders

Your physician is going to perform the following surgery for you; placement of tissue expanders.

The surgery usually takes one hour per expander (in addition to mastectomies).

Expected time in the hospital will be overnight. After 48 hours, please change your dressings daily. If you have blue sutures, use antibiotic ointment and maxi pads. If not, just use maxi pads.

Recovery time is usually one week.

You may return to work in 2 weeks

You may resume driving when you are no longer taking narcotic pain meds, and are released by your physician.

Activity restrictions: no lifting of anything heavier than a half gallon of milk for 4-6 weeks. You may resume your regular exercise routine in 4-6 weeks or when released by your physician.

You will have a post-op visit in clinic the week after your surgery, call the clinic @ 773-834-7302.

Regarding Drains: you will need to keep an accurate drain log that states how many cc's of fluid drains during a 24 hour period. You may shower right away with drains, but do not take a tub bath. Please call if your drain site shows signs of infection or if it will not sustain suction and stops draining before your post-op visit.

Regarding post-op garments: no bra for 2 weeks.

Reasons to call the Nurse: Your surgery site is red, has a thick yellow discharge, you have a fever, you have severe nausea, or severe pain at the surgery site. Your drain fell out, your sutures came out.

Who to call: Bernadette RN at 773-702-6302. Or if it is after normal business hours or on the week end, call 773-702-1000, ask for the page operator and have them page the Plastic Surgery Resident on call.

For questions, please feel free to e-mail the nurse at: bschmitt@surgery.bsd.uchicago.edu