

ROD J. ROHRICH, M.D.
PLASTIC SURGERY

BRACHIOPLASTY
(Arm Lift)
AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS

1. IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET OUT OF BED EARLY AND OFTEN AFTER YOUR SURGERY (WITH ASSISTANCE) TO PREVENT POSTOPERATIVE PROBLEMS. PLEASE TAKE 15-20 DEEP BREATHS PER HOUR FREQUENTLY TO KEEP YOUR LUNGS CLEAR. KEEP YOUR HEAD ELEVATED ABOUT 30 DEGREES (TWO PILLOWS) WITH YOUR KNEES SLIGHTLY FLEXED. HAVE SOMEONE STAY WITH YOU FOR THE FIRST 2-3 DAYS AFTER SURGERY AS YOU MAY NEED ASSISTANCE GETTING IN AND OUT OF BED.
2. 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.
3. **DO NOT SMOKE.** This is very important.
4. After your surgery, start with a liquid diet and then progress to a soft diet. Limit spicy foods which cause gas or bloating. Though it is impossible to get rid of gas entirely, there are strategies to reduce it. Eat and drink slowly. Do not gulp. Chew thoroughly. Cut down on carbonated drinks. Avoid sugar-free gums and sugar-free candies that contain sorbitol or zylitol – both sweeteners are poorly digested. If gas is painful and persistent, call our office. People are all different so you will need to use your judgment on food choices.
5. You will have a skin glue (Dermabond) on your incision sites for 7-10 days. You can shower with this on your incision sites.
6. If you have sutures, they will be removed in 7-10 days and you will wear steri-strips for 3-4 weeks. Thereafter, apply scar cream (order from the Epi Center 214-887-1577) to maximize wound healing beginning at week 3. Use the cream for 6 months after surgery.
7. Take your pain pills, herbal supplements, and muscle relaxants as directed to manage your discomfort.
8. Keep your drainage bulbs collapsed and please record time and amounts of drainage over a 24-hour period. All patients heal differently according to many factors. Dr. Rohrich will make the decisions regarding drain removal and necessity of office visits. (Generally the drains will be removed when the drainage is 30cc or less in a 24-hour period, which usually occurs in 5-7 days.) You may shower 24 hours after the drains are removed.
9. Please wear your arm compression binder continuously for 14 days. You can take it off to shower on day 3 per Dr. Rohrich's instructions.
10. Do not drive for 7-10 days.

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11. You may resume sexual activity in 4 weeks. (Raising your blood pressure for the first 10 days following surgery may cause bleeding.)
12. Do not take ibuprofen, aspirin or products containing aspirin for **3 weeks after** surgery.
13. 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 3-4 weeks. (Keep your heart rate under 100 for 3 weeks.) You may begin swimming 4 weeks post-operatively.

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. Rohrich will want to see you to remove the fluid.

If you have nausea, vomiting, rash, shortness of breath, or diarrhea after taking your medications, please call our office.

If you develop a fever (oral temperature greater than 100°), redness and/or increased pain at the surgical incision sites please call Dr. Rohrich immediately.

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AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS (continued)

It is important to be seen by Dr. Rohrich after your initial post-op checks. He will see you in follow-up appointments at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 6 months and 1 year post-op. Call to schedule your appointments at UT Southwestern Medical Center office at 214-645-2353 or Dallas Plastic Surgery Institute at 214-821-9114 between the hours of 8:30 – 5:00.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL DR. ROHRICH

If you are a patient at one of the facilities below, please call between the hours of 8:30-5:00. If you need immediate care, please call Dr. Rohrich anytime on his cell. There is no such thing as a minor question. I would rather you call me than wonder and not do the right thing, so please call my office, or email me anytime.

Dr. Rohrich's cell: 214-500-4870
Dr. Rohrich's email; rod.rohrich@utsouthwestern.edu
Dr. Rohrich's website: www.drrohrich.com

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