

**ROD J. ROHRICH, M.D.**  
**PLASTIC SURGERY**

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**ABDOMINOPLASTY**  
**(Tummy Tuck)**  
**AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS**

- IT IS IMPORTANT TO GET OUT OF BED EARLY AND OFTEN AFTER YOUR SURGERY (WITH ASSISTANCE) TO PREVENT POSTOPERATIVE PROBLEMS. PLEASE TAKE DEEP BREATHS FREQUENTLY TO KEEP YOUR LUNGS CLEAR (15-20 PER TIME).
- It is important to walk slightly - “stooped over”- bent at the hips for 3-5 days to release tension on the suture line. Sleep with your hips in a flexed position. These instructions aid in the quality of your scar.
- Take your pain pills, herbal supplements, and muscle relaxants as directed for the first 2-3 days to manage your discomfort.
- Keep your head elevated about 30 degrees (two pillows) with the knees slightly flexed.
- Stay on a soft diet for 2-3 days and avoid spicy food which can cause nausea and gas.
- Keep your drainage bulbs collapsed and 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 7-10 days). You may shower in 2-3 days, make sure someone is with you at your first shower!
- Wear a binder continuously for 7-10 days. You can take it off to shower.
- Apply antibiotic ointment twice daily to the incision for 3 days only.
- Your sutures will be removed in 7-10 days and you will wear steri-strips for 3-4 weeks. Apply scar cream (order from the Epi Center 214/887-1577) to maximize wound healing. Use the cream for 6 months after surgery.
- Please call Dr. Rohrich immediately at any sign of infection which would be signaled by fever, increased pain, new redness or swelling in the abdominal area.
- You may resume sexual activity in 4 weeks. For the first 10 days following surgery, raising your blood pressure (heart rate) will cause bleeding. Abdominal stress on your muscles will stretch/break the stitches if you exercise before 4 weeks. At four weeks you should consider passive or less vigorous sexual activity that will not cause abdominal movement.

**ABDOMINOPLASTY (Tummy Tuck)  
AFTER CARE INSTRUCTIONS (continued)**

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**POST-OP**

- Please do not drive for 7-10 days
- Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs for 3 weeks
- It is good to walk for 15-20 minutes 2 to 3 times per day.
- Do not take aspirin or products containing aspirin for 3 weeks after surgery.
- Do not run, lift weights, play tennis or golf for 3-4 weeks after surgery. (Keep your heart rate under 100 for 3 weeks.)
- You may begin swimming 4 weeks post-operatively

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Moderate swelling of your abdomen 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.
2. Because of the removal of tissue from your abdomen, there is a certain amount of tightness that is to be expected. This will slowly relax within 6 months.
3. If you notice some vaginal burning and itching (vaginitis) as a result of the antibiotic used during and after surgery, our office or your family physician can prescribe Diflucan.
4. Infrequently after surgery you may have fluid in the abdomen after the drains are removed. If this happens, you will notice a fullness or sloshy feeling in you abdomen. Please contact our office so we can aspirate it easily.
5. It is important to be seen by Dr. Rohrich at 3 weeks, 6 weeks, 6 months, and 1 year post-op.
6. 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 xylitol - 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.
7. Some suggestions to ease abdominal discomfort or indigestion after surgery:
  - Drink a lot of water - 8 glasses a day!
  - Drink warm liquids (tea or coffee).
  - Prune juice mixed with 7-Up (half and half) for constipation
  - If severely constipated use Phillips Milk of Magnesia, white Karo syrup (2 tablespoons in am and pm taken with one glass of warm water) stool softeners, and fleet enemas (regular or oil retention) as a last resort.
  - Walking helps the circulation in legs and bowels.