



**THOMAS TREY SANDS, M.D.**  
PLASTIC AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY  
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## **POSTOPERATIVE CARE – OUTPATIENT SURGERY**

### **YOUR FIRST 48 HOURS**

- Very Important:** If you have excessive bleeding or pain, call the office at (504) 888-4297, day or night.
- Your First 24 Hours:** If you are going home, a family member or friend must drive you because you have been sedated. Someone should stay overnight with you.
- Activity:** Take it easy and pamper yourself. Try to avoid any straining. You may go to the bathroom, sit and watch TV, etc., but **NO MATTER HOW GOOD YOU FEEL, DO NOT CLEAN THE HOUSE, REARRANGE THE ATTIC, ETC.!** We do not want you to bleed and cause any more swelling and bruising than is unavoidable.
- Dressings:** Keep your dressings as clean and dry as possible. Do not remove them until instructed to do so. Please do not allow pets to sleep with you or have immediate contact with incision sites after surgery.
- Cold Water Compresses:** (ONLY IF YOU ARE HAVING FACIAL PROCEDURES) Cold water compresses help to reduce swelling, bruising, and pain. Use gauze pads (3 to 4 together) dipped in iced water and then put them in a zip-lock bag in the refrigerator or ice chest next to your bed. Remove the gauze pads from the zip-lock bag and apply to surgical areas. This should help, not hurt. If the ice feels uncomfortable, don't use it as often.
- Ice Packs:** We prefer you not to use ice in direct contact with surgical areas. Occasionally you will receive insulated, soft bags at the surgical facility that can be filled with ice. These are safe to use as long as it does not hurt. It should feel better.
- Diet:** If you have any postoperative nausea, carbonated sodas and dry crackers may settle the stomach. If nausea is severe, use the suppository or sublingual zofran that was prescribed preoperatively. If you feel normal, start with liquids and bland foods, and if those are well tolerated, progress to a regular diet for supper. Avoid orange juice or any acidic drink, greasy or spicy foods. **NO DRINKING WITH STRAWS FOR FACIAL SURGERY PATIENTS.**

- Driving: Please don't drive for at least 4 days after general anesthesia or intravenous sedation or while taking prescription pain pills.
- Alcohol: Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and could increase postoperative bleeding. Please don't drink if you are taking prescription pain pills, as the combination of pain pills and alcohol can be dangerous.
- Smoking: Smoking reduces capillary flow in your skin. We advise you not to smoke at all during the first 10 days after surgery.
- Post Operative Appointments: It is very important that you follow the schedule of appointments we establish after surgery.

## **LONGER TERM POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

- Sun Exposure: If fresh scars are exposed to the sun, they will tend to become darker and take longer to fade. Sunscreen can help. Take extra care and precautions if the area operated on is slightly numb – you might not “feel” a sunburn developing!