



Breast Care Center: 315-464-8224

www.universityhospital.org

Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Post Operative Instructions: Mastectomy with or without Sentinel Node Biopsy and/or Axillary Node Dissection

You will be discharged from the hospital with a bandage covering your surgery site. You may have a drain in place when you are discharged.

If You Have A Drain In Place When You Go Home:

- Do not remove the bandage until your doctor sees you for your post operative visit.
- Do not take a shower or bath until this bandage has been removed.
- Follow the directions on the Drain Care Instruction Form.
- If you see **bright red blood** on your bandage, call the Breast Care and Endocrine Surgery Center right away. **The phone number is 315 464-8224.** In the meantime hold a washcloth with firm pressure over the surgery site for 4 to 5 minutes to stop the bleeding.
- If your breast swells, becomes hard and painful, or you develop a fever, chills or sudden shortness of breath, call the Breast Care and Endocrine Surgery Center right away.
- When there is only 30 ccs or less of fluid in the drain(s) for the last 24 hours call the Breast Care Center to have the nurse practitioner remove your drain. This visit will usually occur before your post-operative visit with the surgeon.
- Once your drain is removed, if you develop **swelling** underneath your arm or along your chest wall, call the Breast Care Center. This is most likely caused by fluid under the skin. It is usually not blood and not an emergency. Your doctor or nurse practitioner will have you come into the office and will drain the fluid.

What do I do if I am in pain?

- You may have pain on your chest wall or under your armpit. You may feel more pain when you move your arm. **This is normal.** You will be given written instructions and shown how to do arm exercises and stretches after surgery. These exercises will help you to move your arm and decrease the pain.

- You will be given a prescription for pain medicine before you leave the hospital, to be filled at your pharmacy. Take the pain medicine as directed. You will have better pain control by taking your pain medicine on time.
- As your pain decreases over the next few days, you can change to Acetaminophen, Tylenol®, or Ibuprofen, Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®. Take two tablets every four to six hours as needed. **Do not take Aspirin.**

When will I have a post-operative visit?

- Your final pathology report takes 4 to 5 days. You will be contacted by the nurse practitioner with the pathology results.
- You will be given an appointment for a post-operative visit with your surgeon 7 to 10 days after your surgery. During your visit, the surgeon will discuss the pathology results with you and future treatment plans. Many patients find it helpful to bring someone with them to this appointment.

Speak Up if You Have Any Questions or Concerns