PARTIAL MASTECTOMY/LUMPECTOMY WITH SENTINEL LYMPH NODE BIOPSY
POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

CARE OF THE INCISION
*Your incisions will be covered with a gauze dressing and sealed with tegaderm (like sticky saran wrap.) The dressing can be removed after 48 - 72 hours. Under the dressing you will find several thin paper tapes (steri-strips) covering the incisions. The steri-strips should be left in place. The stitches are beneath the skin and will dissolve. You may shower before the dressing is removed (it is waterproof) or after you have taken the dressing off.

or

*Topical Skin Adhesive may be used over your incision instead of the paper steri-strips. It is a sterile liquid skin adhesive that holds the wound edges together. The film will usually remain in place for 5 – 10 days then naturally fall off your skin. Do not scratch, rub, or pick at the adhesive skin film. This may loosen the film before your wound is healed. If you are required to place a dressing over the incision, do not place tape over the skin adhesive since this may remove the skin adhesive.

The breast may look bruised (black and blue) and swollen. The swelling will go down and the bruising will fade after a week or so.

Do not scrub the incision. Just let the water run over them and then gently pat the areas dry. Do not submerge the incisions for 1 week (no baths, hot tubs, or swimming pools) or as directed by your physician.

COMFORT MEASURES – You may feel tired and have some discomfort for a few days to a few weeks. Wearing a bra day and night after your breast surgery can be comfortable for the first week. This will prevent the breast from pulling on the stitches and minimize any pain or discomfort you may have. We suggest a comfortable, cotton bra without underwire. The area of incisions may be bruised, swollen and sore. Use an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas on the incisions 20 minutes every hour for the first 3 days to minimize swelling.

PAIN CONTROL – You will receive a prescription for narcotic pain medication to use following your surgery. Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) taken 3-4 times a day with food can help the prescription pain medication work more effectively. You may taper the pain medication as necessary. Ibuprofen or Tylenol may be sufficient to control any discomfort.

FOLLOW-UP OFFICE VISIT – You need to be seen in the office approximately 2-4 weeks after your surgery. You will be given this appointment when the date of your surgery has been set and it will be documented in the surgical paperwork mailed to you.
**PATHOLOGY RESULTS** - Information about the cancer in your breast and whether it has spread to your lymph nodes will generally be available within 7 to 10 days after your operation. You will be called at home with the results, usually in the evening.

**ACTIVITY/RETURN TO WORK** – Limit your activities after surgery to what is comfortable for you. You may return to work when you feel ready (usually a few days to 1-2 weeks) as long as your job does not involve heavy lifting or strenuous activity. You may return to work before being seen in the office postoperatively.

**DRIVING** – You may drive when you are not using any prescription pain medication and when you are able to react normally.

**WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE** - Do not hesitate to call the office if you develop a fever (temperature greater than 101), shaking chills, bleeding or drainage from your incision, redness around the incision, persistent or increased pain, or with any other problem that concerns you. The office is open 9a.m. to 5p.m. Monday through Friday. After hours and weekends the answering service will direct your call to the on call physician.

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