

# After Goldilocks Breast Reconstruction

## Self-care at home

*This handout explains what to expect, how to prepare, and how to plan for your recovery after mastectomy with Goldilocks reconstruction.*

## What is a Goldilocks procedure?

At the time of skin-sparing mastectomy, surgeons sometimes remove extra tissue and make it flat. However, in a *Goldilocks procedure*, your surgeon re-arranges this tissue over the mastectomy to create a small breast mound.

## Incision Care and Healing

- You may be given a surgical bra. If this is the case, wear the surgical bra for 4 weeks after your surgery as comfort allows. Remove it for showering and laundering.
- If you are not provided with a surgical bra, you are welcome to wear a non-compressive (loose fitting) bra or camisole (no underwire).
- Remove the outermost dressing on your breast 48 hours after surgery. Do this before you shower for the first time. If your incision has thin strips of white tape (Steri-Strips) over it, leave them in place until they fall off. If the Steri-Strips are still in place when you come to the clinic for your first follow-up visit, your provider will remove them.
- You may experience numbness at your surgical site. Your surgical sites may be bruised and swollen.

## Hygiene

- Please take a shower 48 hours after surgery. We recommend daily showers to reduce the risk of infection.
- Use mild soap and wash very gently over your incisions.
- Do not take a bath, sit in a hot tub, or go swimming until your incisions are fully healed and no scabs remain. This may take 4 to 6 weeks.

## Activities and return to work

- For **4 weeks**, move your arms gently:
  - Do not reach your arm above shoulder height on the side of surgery.
  - Do not lift, push, or pull anything that weighs more than 8 pounds (about the weight of a gallon of water). This includes children and pets.
  - Avoid repetitive arm movements such as chores (vacuuming, doing dishes, and laundry).



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- Avoid aerobic exercise (activities that cause heavy breathing or sustained elevated heart rate).
- Walking is encouraged because it is helpful for healing and rebuilding strength. Start with 3 to 4 walks a day for 5 to 10 minutes each. Gradually increase your distance and length of time as you heal.
- Return to work varies from person to person and depends on the type of work you do. Please discuss with your surgeon what may be best for you.

## Drains

You will have drains placed at the time of surgery. We will teach you how to care for them. Please read the handout “Closed Bulb Drain Care: For a Jackson-Pratt (JP) or Blake Drain” to learn more.

## Pain control

- Please read the handout “Pain Control After Reconstructive Surgery.”
- Please do not use ice or heat directly on your surgical sites.

## Sleep position

- Sleep on your back for 4 weeks after surgery, with your head raised.
- It may be helpful to stack pillows, use a wedge pillow, or sleep in a recliner to keep your head raised.

## When to contact the care team:

### Call the clinic nurse if you have:

- Bleeding or drainage that soaks your dressing (hold pressure on the site to lessen bleeding)
- A fever higher than 100.5°F (38°C)
- Shaking and/or chills
- Any signs of infection at your surgical site
- Redness
- Increased swelling
- Bad-smelling drainage
- Pus or cloudy colored drainage
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- New rash
- Pain that is worsening and is no longer eased by your pain medicine

**If you are experiencing new chest pain or shortness of breath, call 911.**

**Redness, swelling, pain/cramp, or warmth, usually in one limb, may be signs of a blood clot. Please go to your local ER.**

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

**During Clinic Hours (Monday through Friday except holidays, 8am to 5pm).**

If you have any questions or concerns, message your surgeon through MyChart. Please include a photo if it will help explain your concern.

You may also call the Center for Reconstructive Surgery at 206.598.1217 option 2.

### **Urgent Needs Outside Clinic Hours**

If you have an urgent care need after hours, on weekends, or on holidays, please call 206.598.6190 and ask to speak to the plastic surgeon on call.