Mastectomy With or Without Reconstruction
Care After Surgery

Please read the instructions outlined below and refer to this sheet in the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after you leave the hospital. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. While your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, unavoidable complications occasionally occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your caregiver. If your surgeon left drains in, be sure to record the drain output and care for the drain site as instructed.

POST-OPERATIVE EXERCISES

- Lie in bed with your arm at your side. Raise your arm straight up and back, as if reaching for the headboard.
- Lying in bed, clasp your hands behind your head and push your elbows into the mattress.
- Raise your shoulders and rotate them forward, down, and back in a circular motion to loosen your chest, shoulder, and upper back muscles.
- Lying with your elbow bent and your arm on the bed at a 90 degree angle to your body, rotate your shoulder forward and bring your forearm down toward your feet. Then bring your forearm back up.
- With your arm raised parallel to the floor, clench and unclench your fist.
- Standing with your palm flat against a wall, "walk" your fingers up the wall.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- There is pus coming from the wound.
- There is drainage from a wound lasting longer than one day.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- There is a breaking open of a wound (edges not staying together) after the sutures have been removed.
- You develop dizzy episodes or fainting while standing.
- You develop persistent nausea or vomiting.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You have difficulty breathing, or develop any reaction or side effects to medications given.

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