

Postoperative instructions—mastectomy

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Keep your incision clean and dry. You may take the bandage off and shower after the first day. Protect the drain with a piece of Saran wrap. Your nurse will show you how to do this. If your incision becomes red or you start to run a fever, call _____. Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while you are taking your pain medicine. You have an appointment on _____ with Dr. _____.

If your incision becomes red...Look down. You look flat on one side. There's a bandage there. Look at the bandage. Touch the bandage. Jerk your hand away.

Stand in front of the bathroom mirror. Walk away from the mirror. The light is too bright. It hurts your eyes.

Stand in front of another mirror. The one in the bedroom. Turn off the overhead light – the light from the window should suffice. Open your robe. Look at your face. Close your robe. Look into your own eyes. Open your robe. Look at the bandage. Close your robe and tighten the belt.

Walk away from the mirror. The light is still too bright.

Walk into the kitchen and find the Saran Wrap. Your beloved sits there, watching the evening news. Say to your beloved, "Come with me."

Walk up to the bathroom mirror. Stand and face your beloved. Say, "Will you help me?"

Don't wait for an answer.

Slip your robe off your shoulders. Let it fall from your arms and hang loose from your belt. Bare your entire chest.

Say to your beloved, "Will you take off the bandage?"

Say to your beloved, "Will you put the Saran Wrap over the incision so I can take a shower?"

Do not say to your beloved, "Do you find me repulsive?"

Say, rather, "Is the incision red? Does it look infected? Can you tell?"

Turn and look into the mirror, in the bright light.

Stand tall, and look. Feel his hands on your shoulders.