

Pre-Surgery Checklist

What to do before my surgery...

- Purchase your compression garment. You can purchase from DCS or online.
- Fill prescriptions and purchase over the counter medications.
- Begin hydrating **3 days** prior to surgery (64 oz. in 24 hrs.).
- If you smoke, vape, or use tobacco products, **STOP** now.
- **STOP** drinking alcohol **1 week** prior to surgery.
- **STOP** taking **2 weeks** prior to surgery:
 - Aspirin
 - Hormone replacement (**Please consult your GYN for approval**)
 - Birth control (**Please consult your GYN for approval**)
 - Anti-inflammatory medications (Ibuprofen, Aleve)
 - Fish oil
 - Vitamin C and Vitamin E
 - Red wine

What to do after my surgery...

- Continue to hydrate. **64 oz. in 24 hrs.**
- Manage pain with over the counter pain relievers and prescription medications as needed.
- During the first week after surgery, you should aim for **3 five-minute walks a day** around your house or outside. During the second week, you should increase to **3 ten-minute walks a day.**
- Continue using Arnica and Bromelain supplements. Use topical Arnica on areas of swelling, bruising, and soreness. **Avoid direct contact with incisions.**
- Take a shower. You can shower starting the first day post-surgery. Let soap and water run over incisions and **dry well** after. You can shower with your drains.
- Increase protein in your diet. Protein helps the body to heal.



- Wear compression garment for **23 hours per day**, for **3 weeks**. If you have foam pieces, continue to wear those in your garment for **3-4 days**. This provides additional compression. If the garment feels too tight and/or uncomfortable, remove the foam pieces. Your garment should be snug to provide compression, but should not be painful.
- Apply ice to areas of soreness. Use the **20 minutes on, 20 minutes off** rule. This is to protect the skin that may still have reduced sensation from surgery.
- Monitor for any signs or symptoms of infection. Please see below when to call the doctor.

What to do the day of my surgery...

- **Stop eating and drinking at midnight the night before your surgery.** You can take your regular morning medications with a small sip of water.
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes that slip on.
- You can shower the morning of surgery or the night before.
- Do not apply anything to your body
 - **NO** make-up
 - **NO** hair products
 - **NO** jewelry/body piercings
 - **NO** fingernail polish or fake nails

Emergencies: When to call the doctor

1. If you have a severe increase in pain that is not relieved by pain medication.
2. If you have excessive swelling on one side and not the other.
3. If you experience shortness of breath.
4. If you have any side effects of medications such as rash, headache, nausea, or vomiting.
5. If you have an oral temperature over 101.5 degrees. (It is normal to have a slight temperature after your surgery).
6. If you have yellow, green, or white puss drainage or foul odor from the incisions.
7. If you have bleeding from the incisions that is difficult to control with light pressure.
8. If your recovery has been improving for days/weeks then you feel your recovery has declined, you feel run down, or sick.

★ If you have urgent questions or concerns after hours, you can contact **Dr. Ditesheim at 704-650-2371** or his **Nurse at 980-505-3306**



Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How long will the swelling and bruising last?

A: Swelling and bruising is your body's natural response to surgery. You can expect to see the most significant swelling in the first week, often peaking on day 4 post-surgery. You can experience inflammation for up to a year after your procedure, but the majority should subside in the first 6 months. The first 3-4 weeks are your immediate recovery period. The significant swelling and bruising that you may experience in the first week should be greatly decreased after weeks 3-4.

Q: When can I return to work?

A: You can return to work as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. We caution you to not drive a car or make important decisions while taking narcotic pain medication.

Q: When can I start exercising again?

A: We recommend waiting until the 4-6 week mark to return to exercise, but you should begin walking immediately. A slow, gradual progression is the best way to return to your normal level of activity. It is normal to see an increase in swelling after increased activity. This is your body's way of telling you it needs rest and recovery. Listen to your body.

Q: When can I have sex?

A: You can have sex whenever you feel comfortable doing so.

Q: What are my risks after surgery?

A: Any type of surgery presents risk. In the immediate post-surgical period (weeks 1-4) we are on highest alert for the presence of blood clots. A blood clot can travel to the lungs and cause a pulmonary embolism, which can lead to death. This is not common, but it is a risk that you should be aware of. The best way to prevent blood clots is early walking after surgery. Walking helps blood to circulate throughout the body. In the first few days after surgery, you should be walking around your house for **at least 5 minutes, for at least once an hour**. Additionally, you should perform a **cough and deep breath** sequence about 5 times per hour. You will cough, then take a big deep breath. This helps to keep your lungs clear and provide oxygen to the body.

You are also at risk for blood loss. This can present after surgery as a drop in your hemoglobin levels, which we monitor before and after surgery. Some signs of a low hemoglobin are shortness of breath, exhaustion, and pale color to the skin. If you experience any of these symptoms, please let us know immediately. The best



ways to increase hemoglobin levels are **increasing fluid intake, increasing iron in the diet (red meat, green leafy vegetables), and an iron supplement, if needed**. If hemoglobin levels drop too significantly, you may need a blood transfusion.

Q: I'm scared of going under general anesthesia. What can I expect?

A: This is one of the most common fears that patients express. First and foremost, if Dr. Ditesheim feels that it is not safe for you to undergo general anesthesia, you will not be cleared for your procedure. Your safety is our priority.

At Ditesheim Cosmetic Surgery, general anesthesia is administered by a Certified Nurse Anesthetist. This person is trained and experienced in administering anesthesia to surgery patients, and will be by your side from the start of the procedure until you are awake from surgery.

Q: What can I expect immediately after my surgery?

A: Immediately after your surgery you will wake up in our recovery room in the care of a highly experienced recovery nurse. She will be monitoring you for 1-2 hours until you are discharged home or to your overnight caretaker. Soreness, swelling, bruising, and drainage are all very normal and expected immediately after surgery and for the first few weeks. Use ice, Arnica, Bromelain, and pain relievers as directed. Wear your compression garment as directed. Recovery is a process that can last up to 12 months. It is important to remember that different people recover at different rates. We are here to help you get through each stage of recovery.

Q: How can I prevent infection after surgery?

A: Infection is a risk that is present in all surgical procedures. At our accredited surgery center, we are diligent about upholding the highest level of cleanliness and sterility. After surgery, you are responsible for keeping your incisions clean. **You should shower the day after surgery.** You should have your caretaker close by while you shower because the warm water may cause dizziness. Let the water and soap run over your incisions. You do not need to scrub the area or wash with a special soap. Afterwards, **dry your incisions well.** Moist areas encourage bacteria growth, so keeping your incisions clean and dry is very important. If your home is supplied with well water, please let us know. Avoid public water (pools), lakes, and oceans for 4 weeks after surgery. Frequent hand washing is very important, especially if you are touching your surgical incisions.

Q: How can I speed up my recovery?

A: Every person recovers at a different rate, so it is important to be patient. Recovery takes time. You should eat a healthy diet, minimizing processed foods. Your body needs fuel to recover, so we want to feed it with nutritionally-dense food (fruits and vegetables). Additionally, you should increase the protein in your diet. Your goal



should be 20 grams of protein per meal. Some protein sources include meat and fish, beans, Greek yogurt, nut butters, and protein shakes. Your body uses protein to heal and recover. You can also take a daily multivitamin. This will help provide important micronutrients that your body will use for healing. Continue to increase fluid intake.

Balance activity with rest periods. “Over-doing” it can set you back in your recovery process, but staying on bedrest will put you at risk for complications. Listen to your body, and if you need guidance on how to manage your activity level, we are here to help.

Ice your surgical areas to reduce pain caused by inflammation. Use the “**20 minutes on, 20 minutes off**” rule. Never ice directly on the skin--you should ice over your compression garment. Continue using topical Arnica on areas of bruising and swelling and the tablets/pellets. You can take Epsom salt baths after the first week. You can find Epsom salt over the counter. Add a generous amount to your bathtub and soak for 20 minutes. This is helpful in reducing pain and swelling. Always dry well afterwards.

