

## **Instructions for Care after your Latissimus Dorsi Flap Breast Reconstruction**

In this surgery, the muscle, skin, fat, and blood vessels from the back are used to create a breast. The tissue flap is tunneled under the skin through the axilla (under arm) to the front of the chest. The tissue flap is used to create a pocket for the temporary tissue expander and subsequent breast implant.

After your surgery, the following guidelines may be helpful. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call Dr. Lynch at 609-448-6200.

1. Following surgery you will be in a surgical bra to maintain compression. You may remove the bra daily for one hour in the morning and evening to relieve any garment pressure on your skin.
2. Please finish taking all of your antibiotics as prescribed. Often, eating yogurt may help with minimizing some of the gastrointestinal side effects of antibiotics. If you are prescribed narcotics for pain management, it is important to increase fruits and vegetables in your diet to minimize the side effects of constipation. It may be necessary to take a stool softener (Colace) while taking narcotics.
3. Continue to stay well hydrated: drinking at least 6-8 glasses of water a day.
4. Please notify the office if you experience fever, chills, redness, or unusual swelling after your surgery.
5. Please avoid strenuous upper arm/chest muscle exercises for 6 weeks after surgery. Please limit lifting to no greater than 10 lbs.
6. You will have a surgical drain from each breast, and your back, for a few days. Please empty these drains and record the output as instructed (see attachment). Please “strip” the drains 3-4 times a day as instructed to maintain drain patency. Please do not remove the sterile dressings around your drains.
7. You may shower on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after your surgery. Do not remove the sterile dressing around the drain sites. Please wear a cotton belt while in the shower and pin the drains to this belt.
8. After 7 days you may remove the surgical bra and wear a “sports” type bra that will provide support and maintain the placement of the implants. Please do not wear an underwire bra. Please wear a “sports” bra for 24 hours a day for 4 months. You may remove the bra to shower.
9. **Do Not Smoke. Do not be in a room or car when anyone is smoking.**
10. You will receive your implant information card after surgery. Please keep this card available, as it is important to inform other health care providers (dentists, radiologists, etc.) that you have a breast tissue expander/implant in place. It may be necessary to consider prophylactic antibiotics prior to dental work or other invasive procedures. The tissue expander has a port for expansion that includes a metal alloy. Given this information, **THE TISSUE EXPANDER IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH MRI.**

