

# DAUWE

P L A S T I C   S U R G E R Y

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS **PLEASE READ THIS VERY CAREFULLY**

### PREOPERATIVE VISIT

At your pre-operative visit you can expect:

☐ Mammogram/EKG (>50 years) ☐ sign consents ☐ Blood work ☐ Discuss Post-Op Meds

- **Make sure all balances are paid in full (the final balance must be paid 3 weeks before surgery)**
- Be sure to fill all your medications **before** the day of surgery.
- **Do not use any nicotine product 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after surgery.** This includes patches, chewing gum, and e-cigarettes.
- **Avoid alcoholic beverages for 1 week before and 1 week after surgery.**
- **Avoid any medication that thins the blood for 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after surgery (NSAIDs: ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin, Aleve, omega 3, fish oils, multivitamins).**
- If you are taking a prescription blood thinner (aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin, Xarelto, etc.), tell Dr. Dauwe, as you will need to stop it before surgery.
- **If you have any serious health conditions, please discuss the need for preoperative health clearance with Dr. Dauwe prior to surgery.**

### THE DAY BEFORE SURGERY

- **Make sure you stay hydrated with electrolytes (Gatorade, Powerade, Pedialyte, Water)**
- **DO NOT eat or drink anything 8 hours before surgery (including hard candy, chewing gum, water, and coffee).**

### THE MORNING OF SURGERY

- **Wash your body from neck down to waist with Hibiclens over-the-counter antiseptic skin cleanser (chlorhexidine 4%) or Dial antibacterial soap.**
- **Remove all piercings and jewelry.**
- **DO NOT wear makeup, lotions, powders, creams, deodorants, or other cosmetic products.**

### WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SURGERY

- **Stay active after surgery. This prevents blood clots from forming in the legs after surgery.**
- **Keep your heart rate below 100 for 3 weeks and below 130 for 6 weeks.**
- **Avoid drinking for 1 week after surgery. You will bruise and may bleed after surgery.**
- **DO NOT take any blood-thinning medications (ibuprofen, aspirin, naproxen) for 2 weeks after surgery.**
- **Take your pain medication every 4-6 hours for the first 24 hours, then as needed.**

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- **Narcotics cause constipation, so please try to stop taking these medications as soon as possible. Eat high-fiber foods and take an over-the-counter stool softener such as Senna, Colace, or Dulcolax.**
- **If you are constipated, drink milk of magnesia.**
- **You can take Tylenol, but some pain relievers contain Tylenol (acetaminophen). Do not take more than 3000 mg of Tylenol in a 24-hour period.**
- **You may drive after you stop taking narcotic painkillers and may react physically to traffic (swerve or hit the brakes).**
- **Sensations such as numbness, tingling, sharpness, and burning are common during the healing process. These sensations can last from several weeks to several months and will gradually disappear.**
- **Bruising and swelling are normal for 2-3 weeks. Sometimes this lasts longer, but it always goes away.**
- **You can shower after surgery, but move away from the water stream for the first 4-5 days.**
- **Remove sterile strips in the shower 2 weeks after surgery.**
- **If you have been given compression garments, wear them for 6 weeks after surgery.**
- **Do not bathe/swim/soak in water after surgery until authorized by Dr. Dauwe (usually 6-8 weeks after surgery). This is a serious risk infection!!!**

## TO SPEED UP YOUR RECOVERY

✓ **Take a nap.** After leaving our facility, go home and take a 2-hour nap. This will help you recover from anesthesia and return to your normal routine. **SLEEP ELEVATED FOR THE FIRST WEEK. ELEVATION HELPS WITH SWELLING.**

✓ **Eat something substantial.** You haven't eaten since the day before surgery. Your empty stomach is contributing to your fatigue and discomfort. **Eat a nutritious meal and you will feel better. Avoid foods high in sodium. A healthy diet is critical to healing.**

✓ **Stay active, but not too active.** Stay out of bed most of the day and move around the house. However, keep your heart rate below 100.

✓ **Minimize narcotic pain relievers.** Narcotic painkillers sedate and slow you down. It will make you want to lie down. When you go to bed, you get bored and think about how much it hurts.

✓ **Distract your brain.** If you participate in activities that distract you from the fact that you just had surgery, you will recover faster. **Don't exert yourself.** Watch TV, sit at the kitchen table and have lunch/dinner, talk to friends/family on the phone, and engage in conversations. This helps tremendously.

✓ **Move. Keep your joints loose and muscles stretched.** Stiffness in your shoulders, elbows, neck, and back contributes to your discomfort. Like walking on a sprained ankle, **moving around after surgery will speed your recovery.**



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✓ Ask Dr. Dauwe about manual lymphatic massage.

## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

If you have any of the following, call the office:

✗vomiting rash ✗shortness of breath ✗chest pain ✗swelling of the legs ✗diarrhea  
✗fever ( $>100.5^{\circ}$ ) ✗redness ✗increased tenderness at the surgical site

## IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CALL THE OFFICE

- It is important to be seen according to the follow-up timeline. Dr. Dauwe will explain your post-operative needs at each follow-up visit.
- The office is open from 9 to 5 p.m. (Monday through Thursday) and from 9 to 3 p.m. (Friday).
- If you need immediate attention, call Dr. Dauwe's office anytime. There is no such thing as a silly question. I'd rather you call me and get it right, than not "bother" me and chance not doing the right thing.
- If you have any kind of implants placed and have a major dental procedure or major surgery planned, please notify Dr. Dauwe, so he can prescribe a preoperative antibiotic to protect your implants from possible infection.
- Call the office and schedule your first follow-up appointment.

## SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH SURGERY

### IF YOU HAVE DRAINS

- Keep the drain compressed. Drainage uses negative pressure to remove fluid from the surgery site.
- Remove the lid from the top of the drain, record the daily total, empty the drain completely, compress the drain, and replace the cover.
- If you have implants, you should take antibiotics while the drains are in place.

### BREAST IMPLANTS

- **DO NOT** submerge the incisions underwater for 6 weeks.
- If your implants were **repositioned**, it is normal to have a "dent" or **contour irregularity** on the side of your breast. **This is the inner stitch line and it is always smooth.**

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- You can remove the ACE wrap on day 2 and put on a soft, elastic bra (without hoops). **Breast swelling is common after surgery. If your implants are really tall, use the ACE wrap for an additional 2 weeks (contact Dr. Dauwe's office if you have any questions or concerns).**
- Dr. Dauwe likes the brand "True & Co." for recovery bras (see image below). These bras can be found at **Target and Amazon.**
- **You should wait 4 to 6 months before buying new bras, as your breasts will change in size and shape within that period of time.**
- **Please DO NOT do any strong upper body exercise for 3 months (bench press, push-ups, pull-downs, inverted yoga, etc.)**
- **If you had an operation for capsular contracture, you will lose the fullness/roundness of the upper pole of the contracted implant. Your new breasts will be softer and more natural.**



## BREAST REDUCTION OR LIFT

- You can remove the ACE wrap on day 2 and put on a soft, elastic bra (without underwire). **Dr. Dauwe recommends the "True & Co." brand for recovery bras.** You should wait 4 to 6 months before buying new bras, as your breasts will change in that period of time.
- **T-point breakdown** (separation of breast incisions) is common and will heal on its own. Keep areas clean and dry (wash 2 times a day), place gauze over it, and change gauze periodically throughout the day.

## ABDOMINOPLASTY

- **VERY IMPORTANT: YOU MUST WALK AFTER SURGERY.** This prevents blood clots from forming in the legs and a life-threatening pulmonary embolism. **We recommend you walk at least once an hour. Take 20-30 steps.**
- **If you notice any swelling in your feet/legs, you are experiencing shortness of breath, call Dr. Dauwe immediately.**
- It is normal to walk bent over for the first week after surgery due to muscle spasms. Diazepam (Valium) will help with muscle spasms, discomfort and allow you to relax and unwind.
- **Wear your compression garment (abdominal binder) for 6 weeks after surgery.**
- Any dimples on the skin of the belly will disappear. These are the internal stitches that secure the skin to the muscle.



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## LIPOSUCTION

- **Your liposuction incisions will leak blood-colored fluid.** It is best to sleep on some towels, puppy pads or a mattress pad so that this liquid does not stain your mattress.
- You will have **clear stitches in the areas where liposuction was performed. These clear stitches are dissolvable and will dissolve in the first few weeks of recovery.**
- It is normal to feel firm areas and areas of uneven swelling. As the swelling disappears, the areas will even out.
- **It may take a full year for the swelling to disappear completely.**

## FACELIFT/NECK

- **It's normal to feel tight, bloated, and mild discomfort. Severe pain is not normal. If you are experiencing this, you should discuss it with Dr. Dauwe.**
- Use ice packs on the face/neck (10 minutes on and 10 minutes off).
- **Gently wash your face with your hands and use Q-tips to clean dried blood from your ears.**
- You can wash your hair 4-5 days after the operation. Wait 1 month before receiving a chemical treatment for your hair (hair dye/bleach).
- **Use facial compression for 1 week. Remove compression before eating and showering.**
- Avoid bending or lifting anything heavy for 2 weeks.
- **Numbness in the cheeks, ears, and neck is normal and will improve over time.**
- The first set of stitches will be removed in week 1 after the operation and the second set in 2 weeks. Sometimes, we will leave some longer stitches to minimize scarring.

## EYELID SURGERY

- **Bruising and swelling will be more dramatic around the eyes because the eyelid skin is so thin. Occasionally, your eyes swell closed. Use your prescribed eye drops as prescribed.**
- Use artificial tears (over-the-counter) if your eyes feel dry.
- **If you notice that your eye(s) are bulging or are experiencing severe pain/visual changes, call Dr. Dauwe.** The eyelid stitches will be removed a week after your procedure.

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## SCAR TREATMENT

- **We recommend that you wait until your incisions are completely healed and closed before starting any scar treatment (usually at 6-8 weeks).**
- Dr. Dauwe recommends Biocorneum Scar Gel + SPF 30. Purchase the scar gel at one of your follow-up appointments or go to our online store at:

<https://dauweplasticsurgery-store.com/>

## RECOVERY TIMELINE

### One day

You will feel tired and sore. Bruising and swelling are the worst 2-3 days after surgery. Take your pain medications as needed, take a few naps, but stay reasonably active. Avoid blood thinners, alcohol, and nicotine.

### One Week

Your soreness will be improving, but your fatigue will persist. Dr. Dauwe will remove your stitches at this visit if needed. Your bruising will be improving, but your swelling will persist. Try not to stay out of the house for more than a few hours, because it will exhaust you.

### Two-Three Weeks

This appointment is only made as needed, perhaps for the removal of additional stitches. You will feel more like a normal person, as your pain will be much better and fatigue will improve. Please remove your steri-strips if they are still in place. Get out of the house, run errands, and make plans with friends. You can return to light to moderate exercise (HR>100). Now you may drink alcoholic beverages. It's now okay to resume any blood thinner you've been taking.

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## **Six Weeks**

You'll feel much better and your results will really start to shine. You can return to intense exercise (HR>130), but if you had breast implant surgery, do not do any strong upper body exercise (bench press, push-ups, inverted yoga, etc. - wait 3 months for upper body exercises).

## **Six Months**

At this visit, post-op photos will be repeated. You will see your final results now, as 95% of swelling has resolved.

## **One Year**

Your post-op photos will be repeated, and you are finished with your surgical recovery. 100% of swelling has resolved.

## **Long Term**

You're a patient for life! If you have any concerns or interests, we will always be a resource for you.