**Preparing for Your Plastic Surgery Procedure**

BALDWIN PLASTIC SURGERY

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Dr. Baldwin wants you to have a satisfying plastic surgery experience. That can happen if two things occur… the best possible surgical result and a smooth recovery process. While much of that will come at the hands of Dr. Baldwin, there are numerous things you can do (or avoid) to help maximize the likelihood of a pleasing outcome. To that end, read and follow these simple ‘PREP’ steps before your plastic surgery.

Pre-Surgical Prevention

Prescription medications, over-the-counter supplements and lifestyle habits can help or hurt your surgical results. To prevent the risk of bleeding or excessive bruising and to help tissues heal after surgery, here are some management guidelines:

Medications to avoid two weeks prior to surgery:

•Discontinue use of any nicotine products. This includes cigarettes, cigars, nicotine gum, chews, and patches. Nicotine causes blood vessels to constrict, decreasing the amount of oxygen that is delivered to your tissues trying to heal. This is never a good thing and is one of the major contributors to healing problems after surgery.

•Stop using medications containing aspirin and NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) NSAIDS include such commonly taken over-the-counter and medications as Ibuprofen, Motrin, Alleve, and Advil. These medications can affect how blood clots and can cause bleeding and excessive bruising after surgery. Be sure to read the labels of any non-prescription remedies you regularly take as many of them may contain aspirin. (e.g., Alka Seltzer) For these same reasons, stop taking Vitamin E or drinking red wine before your surgery.

•Stop all herbal medications before surgery. The most common herbs used are Echinacea, Ephedra, Garlic, Ginseng, Ginkogo, Kava, St. John’s Wort, and Valerian. They may adversely affect anesthetic drugs, prolong bleeding and impair healing after surgery. While there is some debate as to which herbs have negative effects on surgery, none of them are life-saving or essential so all should just simply be stopped before your surgery.

•Females: All osteoporosis drugs (e.g., Boniva) should be stopped. They have been reported to increase the risk of stroke after surgery

Medications to start two weeks prior to surgery:

Diet and nutrition are important to healing the weeks following surgery. While not mandating, we suggest the following measures as possible aids to your post-operative recovery.

•Begin a multivitamin supplement at least two weeks, or more ideally one month before surgery. Vitamins and minerals, combined with a diet high in protein, provides the nutritional elements needed for good wound healing.

•Begin high dose Vitamin C supplements (2 grams per day) one week before and for one week after surgery. Vitamin C is a critical molecule needed for making collagen, the very substance that heals tissues back together. Because Vitamin C is water-soluble, there is no risk of ever getting too much as what is not used will be excreted naturally.

**Do Not Eat or Drink at least 8 hours prior to surgery**

This is mandatory before any surgery that requires general anesthetic. Violating this reqirement can have life-threatening consequences. In other words, you are risking death over that cup of coffee or little morsel of food that you think you just cannot go without. Food or liquids in the stomach may be vomited while being put to sleep, entering the lungs (aspiration) and cause choking. For this reason, anesthesia is never performed without being assured that one has an empty stomach. (being honest could save your life!)

Expectations

Dr. Baldwin feels that informed patients have much less anxiety before and after plastic surgery. Great effort is made to educate you as much as possible…from the consultation process to the many educational items that are available and provided to you. Everything you are going to experience is something that we have seen or heard many times over. When in doubt..ask!

Elective plastic surgery, while both exciting and scary, should not be a mystery. The procedures you are having are commonly done and what will occur both during and after surgery can generally be predicted. Being fully informed should make you more comfortable about what you are to experience and what the outcome of surgery will be. Share this information with the person who will be taking care of you for the first few days after surgery. It can be very frightening for a spouse or your family to see how you may look after surgery. A good suggestion is to leave a copy of this ‘PREP’ plan and your Post-Op instructions from your procedures out for your caretakers and supporters to read.

Post-surgical planning

You will need a ride. Because you are having an anesthetic, someone will need to be available to take you home. You cannot drive yourself nor can you take a taxi home. The only exception is for procedures done exclusively with a local injection anesthetic.

•Plan for the hours immediately after your surgery ahead of time: make trips to the pharmacy and grocery store; and arrange for child care. Plan your wardrobe for the day of surgery and a few days after. Loose-fitting clothing that can be unbuttoned or unzipped down the front is best. Designate an area in your home for yourself- such as a quiet bedroom or sofa away from busy family activities. Even if you are having a minor procedure, you will still need a minimum of 24 hours to fully recover from anesthesia, and will not be up to handling responsibilities by yourself.

•Rest and sleep, combined with plenty of fluids are keys to making you feel better sooner after surgery. Fluid and electrolyte replacement is much more important than food immediately after your surgery. Keep some water, “Gatoraid”, or juice nearby and drink regularly. Drink a minimum of ½ oz. of fluid per pound of body weight per day. For example, if you weigh 140lbs you should drink at least 70 oz. per day. Pay attention to your urine. If you are going to the bathroom regularly and the color is clear to pale yellow, it is a good sign you are well hydrated. If your urine is darker yellow or you are not going to the bathroom means you may need to drink more fluids. Do not worry so much about eating. Eat as your appetite dictates – You don’t need to force feed. Allow your stomach to settle immediately after surgery before eating to avoid an upset stomach.

•Allow yourself adequate time for recovery. The biggest mistake most patients make after surgery is shortchanging time for recovery. The number one cause of postoperative pain and complications is ‘over-doing it’ on your arrival home. Plan to take it easy for a few days, and be patient. Everyone is an optimist before surgery. Many patients become a realist afterwards.

•If you need help call the office. **765.838.2119** If we are not in the office or if it is after office hours, an answering service is available to contact Dr. Baldwin for you.

Dr. James D. (Sam) Baldwin

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