

## Post operative information

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Stay healthy by eating a daily balanced diet and keep well hydrated. Sleep well – try to get 8 hours sleep each night the week following your surgery.

After your general anaesthetic procedure you should try and get out of bed and move around every 2-3 hours during the day in order to keep the circulation moving in your legs. If you have been given some special stockings to wear on discharge from the hospital you should wear these stockings until you are fully mobile. By doing this, you reduce the risk of developing a deep vein thrombosis (blood clot in your leg).

You should avoid alcohol for 48 hours after surgery and reduce alcohol intake to less than 2 units per day the week following surgery. Ideally stop smoking altogether after your surgery. If you cannot do this you should reduce smoking significantly and discuss this with Mr Johnson. Absolutely do not smoke for 48 hours following your surgery.

When you are discharged from hospital you will be given painkillers and specific instructions when to take them. An outpatient appointment will be made for any sutures to be removed and for the wounds to be checked and any dressings to be changed. The timing of this depends on the specific procedure you have had. Mr Johnson's PA will make the first follow up outpatient appointment for you to see him.

It is completely normal for there to be some swelling and bruising after surgery. Bruising usually lasts 3-4 weeks though sometimes settles earlier. Depending on the procedure performed there is some expected noticeable swelling which reduces over 4 weeks. There may still be some minor swelling which lasts 6 months. Therefore, for some procedures, the final result may not be appreciated for several months.

### Wound and dressing management

When you are discharged from hospital, you may have only dissolving sutures or have a combination of dissolving sutures and sutures/staples that need to be removed. You will be given specific instructions as to when the sutures/ staples need to be removed. For some procedures there is a brown coloured micropore dressing over the wound regardless of whether there are sutures that need to be removed or not. Either way, you can wash normally and get the micropore dressing wet. You will be given instructions as to when the micropore tape can be removed and whether you need to replace this. It is unusual to need to wear the tape for more than 1 month following surgery. You will be given specific instructions regarding this. For some procedures such as breast enlargement and breast reduction, you will need to wear an elasticated sports bra for 6 weeks. For abdominoplasty surgery you will be provided with an elasticated corset/support garment for 6 weeks. For male breast reduction surgery and liposuction surgery you will need to wear a support garment for 6 weeks. You will be given specific instructions regarding this.

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### Return to work

Depending on the procedure you have undertaken there is some variation as to when you should return to work. For most general anaesthetic procedures it is recommended that you take 1-2 weeks off work. For day case general anaesthetic procedures excluding facial procedures it may be possible to return to work after a few days but you should seek specific advice regarding this from Mr Johnson. If your work involves heavy lifting then you should return to light duties at first. You should avoid heavy lifting or any strenuous activities for up to 6 weeks following surgery.

## Return to driving

In order to stay safe to drive a car after surgery you must be able to perform an emergency stop. For most cosmetic procedures this means you should refrain from driving for 1-2 weeks following surgery. The precise timing is a decision that only you can make based on your own recovery. Mr Johnson cannot take responsibility for when you are safe to drive-only you can do this.

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## Exercise

For most cosmetic procedures you should refrain from any heavy lifting, strenuous exercise, gym work or contact sports for a period of 6 weeks. Thereafter you should start to gradually increase your exercise tolerance a week at a time. It may very well take 3 months or more before you feel able to fully return to your normal exercise routine.

## Long term scar management

All surgical wounds heal by inflammation and form scars. Scars are not just on the skin but are also present under the skin, in fact where ever the surgery has taken place. It is normal for all scars to go red, raised and lumpy for a period before they gradually mature into thin, pale, flat scars. This process of scar maturation can take anything from 3 months to 2 years depending on each individual, the nature of the procedure and the position of the scar on the body.

Usually after 1 month, Mr Johnson will advise you to massage your scars with moisturising cream to help keep the scars supple. There is no strong scientific evidence that any one particular moisturising cream is any better than any other (regardless of any promotion literature) so you are free to choose whichever one suits you.

There is some weak evidence that silicone may help flatten and soften scars. It can be used as a cream applied twice a day (Dermatix or Kelo-Cote) or as a sheet that is topically applied to the skin (Cica-care or Mepiform). These products can be purchased from your local chemist if you wish but you need to be aware that there is no strong evidence that these products are effective.

In the unusual event that your scar appears to behave abnormally by becoming more raised and lumpy and extending beyond the area of the wound then you should contact Mr Johnson's PA to organise an appointment to see him to discuss any appropriate further management.