

Important Information After Free Flap Surgery

Important Information

- Take 81mg of aspirin for three months following surgery, unless you have been advised differently.
- If you develop any significant redness, swelling, fever, chills or have any changes to flap appearance since surgery call the clinic at 407-821-3555.

How long is recovery?

Typically, it will take six to eight weeks before you will be able to resume most normal activities. You will be sore for three to four weeks, improving each week.

Extremity Free Flaps

If you have a free flap on the extremity, you will need to keep the extremity elevated to prevent swelling. After your flap is well-established, the provider you see will probably instruct you to apply compression to the area. If your free flap is on your leg, you will be instructed not to bear weight for approximately four weeks and will be provided with a Dangle Protocol.

Will I have drains in place?

Yes, you will have Jackson-Pratt (JP) drains. There will be a drain at the flap and possibly at the donor site as well. You will need to empty and record the drainage at least twice daily. We typically remove the drains after you have less than 20 ml of drainage daily, for three days in a row, but removal also depends on the quality of the drainage and incisions as well as the location of your free flap.

When can I exercise?

- No lifting over 10 pounds for six weeks after surgery
- No exercise until after six weeks and your incisions are completely healed and you have received clearance from a surgical team provider in our clinic.

When can I shower?

Typically, patients are allowed to shower after discharge from the hospital. However, if you have a skin graft, do not wet the area. You will have received these instructions before hospital discharge.

When can I drive?

We recommend you do not drive for four to six weeks or if you are taking narcotic pain medications. Do not drive unless you are feeling comfortable enough to drive and our staff has cleared you to drive.

Note: ALL information is subject to modification by your surgeon

If you have any questions after your surgery, call our care coordinator at 407-821-3555.

AdventHealth complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número siguiente 407-303-3025.

ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele nimewo ki anba an 407-303-3025.

