



BRACHIOPLASTY (ARM LIFT) PROCEDURE: PRE AND POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS.

The mission of Dr. De La Cruz and his qualified staff is helping you achieve the best results and making your surgical experience as easy, safe and comfortable as possible. We will not take any undue risks with your health. Begin by reading all of the information you have received. It is your responsibility to follow these instructions. Please, read it thoroughly and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Dr. De La Cruz office at the following number: 832- 520-1844.

Two weeks before arm lift surgery:

1. Avoid taking drugs containing aspirin, ibuprofen, blood thinning medication, anti-inflammatory drugs and any herbal supplements that are associated with an increased risk of bleeding during surgery.
2. Confirm your pre-operative history and physical examination appointment with your family doctor/internist. Your pre-operative exam includes the following laboratory tests: Complete Blood Count (CBC), Complete Metabolic Panel (CMP), Pregnancy Test (for women), Electrocardiogram (for patients older than 45 years), and Chest X-rays (when indicated). Tests must be done on an empty stomach in the morning. After having the results, patients should schedule a consultation with Dr. De La Cruz. Depending on your lab tests outcome, Dr. De La Cruz will determine whether the procedure can be performed.
3. If you develop a cold, infection or any other illness prior surgery, please notify the staff at Dr. De La Cruz's office as soon as possible because your surgery may need to be postponed for safety reasons.
4. Vitamins are important in boosting your body's ability to heal. Start taking vitamin C, and minerals such as zinc, calcium, magnesium and iron.
5. Stop smoking and limit your alcohol intake. Do not resume smoking for at least two weeks after your surgery in order to avoid the increased risks of complications associated with nicotine. The nicotine in the cigarette smoke can causes the blood vessels necessary for proper healing to shrink which can lead to healing problems. Moreover, the consumption of alcohol prior to surgery can lead to an increased risk of bleeding during your surgery, and alcohol can also interfere with your post-operative medications and should therefore be avoided as long as you are taking prescription medications.
6. Be sure to arrange for a responsible adult to drive you home after surgery and to stay with you for at least the first night following surgery.

Two days before arm lift surgery:

1. At the grocery store: buy light foods such as juice, tea, Gatorade, bread/bagels, jelly, soup, and JELL-O®
2. Buy Hibiclens Antiseptic/Antimicrobial Cleanser (4% Chlorhexidine gluconate solution) or any other equivalent antibacterial cleanser (such as Betadine™ Scrub liquid soap).
3. Buy a mild laxative (i.e Milk of Magnesia) as well as a stool softener, Colace or Pericolace, for instance.

4. All prescriptions should be filled prior to your surgical date and bring them with you on the day of your surgery.
5. Prepare bed: you will need several pillows and cushions to help keeping your arms elevated above the level of your heart. This will help to decrease swelling.
6. Take only clear liquids one day prior surgery.
7. May start taking Arnica pills: three tablets beneath the tongue, three times daily.

Evening before arm lift surgery:

1. Shower with antibacterial soap (i.e Hibiclens liquid soap) for three full minutes.
2. Take liquids only.
3. Get a good night's rest.
4. Do not eat or drink anything after midnight (12:00am), the night prior to surgery.

The day of the arm lift procedure:

1. Do not eat or drink anything prior to arm lift surgery. Do not smoke or consume alcohol.
2. Shower with Hibiclens antibacterial soap for three full minutes on the day of the surgery, before you go to the surgery center/hospital. Do not put on any makeup, lotion, perfumes or deodorant after washing. Furthermore, do not use hair spray, gel or mousse. Avoid getting Hibiclens solution in contact with your eyes, ears and mouth.
3. Do not wear contact lenses, wigs, hairpins, hairpieces, or jewelry. Dress in loose-fitting, comfortable clothes. Do not wear pullover tops or panty hose.
4. Have a responsible adult drive you to the surgical facility and take you home after surgery. This person should be available to stay with you for at least the first night following surgery. Under no circumstance will you be permitted to go home alone or stay home without another adult present. Please, follow Dr. De La Cruz's recommendation in relation to this decision.

At home after arm lift surgery:

1. It is important for your recovery to get plenty of rest after arm lift. For the first 72 hours, sleep with pillows under your arms to keep them in an elevated position. While in bed, you are encouraged to move your feet to increase the circulation in your legs.
2. Start walking as soon as possible, as this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots. Walk as much as you can around the house with assistance from an adult.
3. Wear compression leg stockings (above the knee) daily for up to 4 weeks to reduce your risk of deep venous thrombosis.
4. A small amount of bloody drainage through the bandage is normal. Protect your bed sheets from bloody drainage.
5. After surgery, you will be wearing a specialized compression garment on your arms, around the clock (except for showering), for approximately 6 months. Wearing the compression garment as directed reduces the likelihood of loose or sagging skin after brachioplasty. Compression garments should be snug but not uncomfortably tight.
6. After the arm lift surgery, you may not shower for 3 days after surgery. Until that time you may sponge bathe only.
7. A liquid diet is best for the day of the surgery. Begin by taking liquids slowly and progress to soups or JELL-O®. You can start a regular diet the next day. It is a good idea to begin taking a stool softener beginning the day after surgery. Avoid salt intake as it will keep you swollen.
8. For the first 72 hours, keep your movements to a quiet level. No lifting greater than 1-2 lbs. for the week. Afterwards, you may start increasing your movements gradually, but there should be no strenuous activity for three weeks after your arm lift surgery. Dr. De La Cruz will advise you when you can start lifting anything heavier.
9. Any discomfort should be relieved by the pain medication. Take extra strength Tylenol™ or Advil™ regularly to help with general discomfort.
10. Every 2-3 hours take deep breaths to expand your lungs.
11. Continue taking your vitamins. You may take iron supplements if you feel fatigued.
12. Do not drive until you are no longer taking any pain medications and you have full range of motion with your arms. You may drive one week after your arm lift procedure provided you are comfortable enough to stop in an emergency situation. You should wear your seatbelt at all times.

13. You may resume exercise in four to six weeks. Consult with Dr. De La Cruz first before starting to work out. It is important to exercise and diet after your procedure to have a long-lasting results. Without proper diet and exercise, you may lose the wonderful results of your cosmetic surgery.
14. Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may want to add more raw fruit to your diet, and be sure to increase fluid intake.
15. Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medications.
16. Do not smoke, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.
17. Resume sexual activity as comfort permits, usually 2-3 weeks post-operatively.
18. Avoid exposing scars to sun for at least 12 months. If sun exposure is unavoidable, make sure to use a high protection sunblock (SPF 30 or greater).
19. Your incision site will be covered with a dressing to keep the area protected. Keep these incisions clean and inspect daily for signs of infection. Some of the common symptoms of surgical site infection are: redness and pain around the area treated, drainage of cloudy fluid from the surgical wound, and fever (above 100.4 F).
20. It is normal to have numbness over the surgical sites. Your fingers and hands should remain warm to touch, pink, and with normal sensation.
21. Do not use a heating pad around the surgical sites. It could cause a burn.
22. No tub soaking while sutures are in place. It's typically recommended to avoid swimming or being in a bath tub when you have wounds that are still open since these wounds can get infected caused by Vibrio bacteria.
23. Resume work and regular activities, one-two weeks after arm lift. You may be instructed to expect a longer recovery time before you return to a physically demanding job.
24. Contact Dr. De La Cruz's office promptly if you notice an increase in swelling, pain, redness, drainage, or bleeding in the surgical area, or if you develop fever (above 100.4 F), dizziness, nausea, or vomiting.