

Following breast reconstructions, you will have additional precautions to follow depending on your type of reconstruction. There may be slight variations depending on your plastic surgeon's preference.

Tissue expander / implant:

- Avoid lifting more than 7 pounds for the first 4 weeks after surgery.

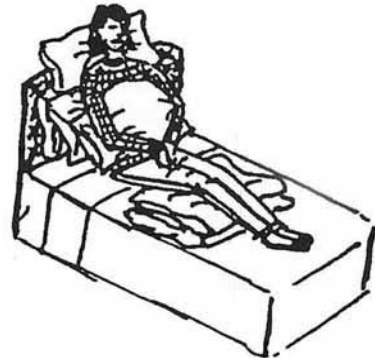
Lat Flap (*Latissimus Dorsi Flap*):

- Avoid any activity requiring resistive motion pulling downwards, such as closing the trunk door of a large car or pulling down to close a tight window, for 8 weeks after surgery.

TRAM Flap (*Transverse Rectus Abdominus Flap*) / DIEP Flap (*Deep Inferior Epigastric Perforator Flap*)

You will ambulate with a flexed trunk posture for the first week to reduce tension on the abdominal closure. At about one week after surgery, you should be able to stand up straight.

Use pillows on your bed at home to elevate your head and feet, with the head raised to 45 degrees (see picture). Use your arms to scoot up or down in bed. To get out of bed, roll to your side and then push up with your arms in order to avoid tension on the abdominal closure. Do the reverse to lie back down.



Short Term (for 2 weeks after surgery):

- No rolling/twisting of trunk.
- No arm range of motion greater than 90 degrees (level of shoulders) on affected side.
- Normal activities of daily living are OK (bathing, dressing, cooking, etc.) as long as you do not raise your arm above shoulder height.
- No driving until cleared by your physician.
- No pressure over chest. You may use a pillow to splint over abdominal incision only. When using a seatbelt in the car, place a pillow between your chest and the chest strap.
- At two weeks you may begin a light walking exercise program.

Long Term (3 weeks to 3 months after surgery):

- No heating pads or ice over flap at any time. Your flap will have impaired or absent sensation possibly for a year following surgery, so excessive heat or cold may burn or damage the skin and the breast tissue.
- At 4 weeks, you may resume extremity range of motion greater than 90 degrees (level of shoulders) on affected side.
- No heavy lifting greater than 5 lbs for 6 weeks after surgery, or until cleared by your plastic surgeon.
- At 6 weeks, you may begin full physical activity EXCEPT for abdominal exercises.
- Abdominal exercises may be resumed at 3 months.
- Do not wear a bra until cleared by your surgeon at your 3rd or 4th week follow-up visit.
- Avoid beverages/food that are high in caffeine. Caffeine constricts blood vessels and can impair blood flow to the healing skin flap.
- No sexual activity for 6 weeks.