

Recovery Following Penile Implant Surgery

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- **REMEMBER THINGS WILL LOOK WORSE BEFORE LOOKING BETTER!**
- **Once healed it will be worth it!**
- **It is important to leave the implant inflated to facilitate better healing**
- **Don't hesitate to call my office: 206.386.6266 for clarification or problems.**

1. The first 3-7 days:

- a. You will likely have two dressings covering the incisions:
 - i. The dressing on the abdomen can be removed on the second day after surgery. Underneath you will see tapes covering the incision. Leave these in place until the edges start to curl, and then you can remove them as you would a band-aid. If you prefer to keep this incision covered with gauze while it heals, just be sure to change the gauze daily and do not use an occlusive / plastic dressing
 - ii. Scrotal incision and the penis are usually wrapped in gauze (white) covered by an elastic dressing (pinkish). Gauze will also be placed in the jockstrap to support the scrotum. All of these are removed on the second day after surgery. I recommend doing this in the shower, in case the gauze is stuck to the incision, and this will make removal easier. Sometimes you will see some blood at the incision, and usually this is normal and resolves on its own. The surface of this incision because of its location can sometimes look a bit 'mucky' and usually this is not a problem.
 - iii. Do not apply solutions like rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide to the incisions as this may cause the stitches to dissolve too quickly.
- b. You may shower on the second day after surgery. Remove the penis and scrotal dressings in the shower. Do not soak in the tub / hot tub / swim for 2-3 weeks.
- c. Removing the catheter: if you were sent home with a catheter the nurse likely gave you instructions on removing it. I usually recommend you do this just before your shower on the second day.
- d. Apply an antibiotic ointment (Bacitracin, Polysporin or Neosporin) to the scrotal incision twice a day for three days, and after that it is okay to let it dry without ointment.
- e. Continue the antibiotic prescribed at discharge until they are gone
- f. Wear the jockstrap from the hospital or other tight fitting underwear to support the scrotum, and this will help reduce the swelling.
- g. Apply an ice pack every few hours for 20-30 minutes for the first 7 days to reduce pain and swelling.
- h. You will likely have received instructions about taking Tylenol, anti-inflammatories and/or pain medication before discharge. Follow those instructions as they will vary for different patients
- i. Resume diet as tolerated, meaning eat what you are hungry for. Pay attention to staying hydrated and eating foods that will help your bowels start to move. If you haven't moved your bowels by the third day after surgery, I recommend you use an over the counter laxative (MiraLax or Milk of Magnesia) or one you already have to encourage a bowel movement.
- j. It is okay to walk and climb stairs, but minimize heavy exertion or lifting >20 lbs for 4 weeks. Many men feel more pain over the abdominal incision because it was placed through muscle.

2. Weeks 2-4:

- a. Likely the swelling will start to decrease and you will start feeling better late in the second week. If you are still having pain and swelling, for many men this is normal. If your medications, icing and supportive underwear are not helping please contact my office to speak to the medical assistant.
 - i. As the swelling decreases you will begin to start feeling the components of the implant. Some feel a slight bulge in the abdomen, and usually this will flatten as the healing progresses.
 - ii. The pump in the scrotum is likely tender but I encourage you to become familiar with its location and shape. You can gently roll the pump around in between your fingers to help soften the tissues, but if it is too tender to do this, it is okay to delay doing this.
- b. Your first follow-up visit is likely planned for 2-4 weeks after surgery. I will examine the incisions and likely deflate the implant at that visit. Most men are still too tender to learn how to inflate / deflate the implant, but if possible we can show you.
- c. It is okay to resume light activity once you feel okay, but avoid lifting >20 pounds, running or heavy exertion for 4 weeks to avoid developing a hernia.
- d. At the end of 4 weeks recovery, you can start resuming normal activity, exercise and exertion. You may be more tired or deconditioned than you expected; be patient with your fitness.

3. Weeks 5 and 6:

- a. Likely you are resuming normal activity and I encourage you to do so if you haven't yet.
- b. If you were instructed to cycle / inflate / deflate the device continue to do so
 - i. Usually I recommend inflating the device as full as you can (without causing pain) leaving it inflated for a full 10 minutes before deflating. This will help the device heal in a good position and also reduce the risk of shortening of the penis after surgery.
- c. If you have not yet been instructed to inflate the implant, we will discuss that at the 6 week follow-up visit.

4. The 6 week mark / follow-up visit:

- a. We will teach you how to use the implant (if we haven't already)
- b. You will find using the implant very clumsy at first, most men do
- c. Inflation of the implant may still be uncomfortable due to pain / swelling. This will eventually resolve.
- d. As you use the device more, you will become more efficient pumping the device and will be able to do this with ease and without pain.
- e. After this visit you are allowed to have intercourse and you will not injure yourself or the implant.
- f. The device is very sturdy :
 - i. You cannot inflate it too much. In fact, most men tend to under-inflate the device. Try inflating the device as much as you can without causing pain. Over time it is likely to inflate more and improve the girth of the penis. For some men, the length will improve also with daily maximal inflation
 - ii. You will not sever or break the tubing to pump. It is okay to firmly grab the pump to secure it in your hands before inflating the implant.

5. Weeks 7-12:

- a. Inflate the device on a daily basis even if you are not having sex:
 - i. Usually I recommend inflating the device as full as you can (without causing pain) leaving it inflated for a full 10 minutes before deflating. This will help the device heal in a good position and also reduce the risk of shortening of the penis after surgery. Over time it is likely to inflate more and improve the girth of the penis. For some men, the length will improve also with daily maximal inflation.
- b. Sexual activity is okay, without any restrictions.
 - i. Many couples will find intercourse a bit awkward at first, as they become comfortable using the implant.
 - ii. For many couples they have not been able to have intercourse for a very long time due to ED. Be patient with yourself and each other. Have fun and remember it may take some experimentation
 - iii. Over time you will likely notice that your sensation improves. Numbness after an implant is very rare.

6. Beyond 3 months:

- a. By now you are likely fully recovered and hopefully have been able to enjoy using the implant.
- b. You have probably become more efficient with inflation / deflation.
- c. I suspect you will already appreciate how much more spontaneous this is compared to pills, injections or penis pumps.
- d. It is no longer required that you inflate the implant daily, but continue to do so if you wish.
- e. If you are still having trouble operating the device, I suggest making an appointment and we can troubleshoot things for you.

7. Longterm:

- a. Most men will use the same device their entire life. Some 10-15% will require a replacement within 10 years.
- b. If you have trouble with malfunction of the device please schedule an appointment so we can address this issue
- c. If you have been treated previously for prostate cancer, continue to follow-up with your urologist for PSA monitoring
- d. If the implant becomes painful, reddened, appears infected (drainage) or you can see one of the components coming through the skin, please contact us sooner rather than later. This is rare, but I'd rather you know about it, just in case.