



## **PATIENT INFORMATION – POST OPERATIVE CARE**

### **WIDE EXCISION BREAST CANCER**

#### *Wound care*

Your breast cancer has been removed during surgery. The incision has been temporarily numbed with local anaesthetic and sewn together with buried dissolvable stitches. A dressing has been applied to the wound, often a skin adhesive and overlying paper tape such as Steristrips®. You can safely get the dressings wet in the shower, as it is important to keep the skin clean. A soft non wired bra, elasticised crop top or Tubigrip® garment will offer support and comfort to the breast wound, even at night when sleeping.

#### *Pain relief*

Regular pain relief of paracetamol such as Panadol®, 1g (two 500mg tablets) four times a day, for the first few days after leaving hospital and prior to exercises or functional activities, provides sufficient pain relief for most people. It is safe to add an anti-inflammatory drug for most patients, but please check with your doctor if you have any concerns.

#### *Activity*

Gentle exercise, for example walking, is recommended. You should avoid more vigorous exercise for at least a week after surgery. You must not drive for at least 24 hours following a general anaesthetic. You may return to light duties including work after 24 to 48 hours in most cases.

#### *Complications*

Internal wound bleeding (haematoma) may be suspected if your breast becomes painful, tense, bruised or swollen. Soft bruising alone is of no great concern. Infection may be suspected if the wound becomes increasingly tender and inflamed. You might start to feel unwell with a fever. This requires urgent attention.

#### *Appointment*

Prior to leaving hospital, an appointment will be made for review within two weeks from your operation. Please ring Dr Joanna Morgan's secretary on 03 9591 9891 if you do not have an appointment.

#### *Contact*

If you have a concern, please contact the hospital, breast care nurse or Dr Joanna Morgan.