



PLASTIC &
RECONSTRUCTIVE
SURGEON

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INFORMATION LEAFLET DIEP FLAP PROCEDURES

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- A flap is a delicate piece of tissue with small blood vessels ensuring its survival.
- Treat the flap with huge care and respect especially for the first 3 weeks.

POST-OPERATIVE CARE:

- **Week 1:**
 - Do not smoke before or after the surgery – it is bad for wound healing and flap survival.
 - Do not put any pressure on the flap.
 - Do not wear tight splints or dressings or clothing around the flap.
 - Lung-physiotherapy and passive exercises of joints not affected by the flap procedure is indicated.
 - Sleep in a position that will keep pressure away from the flap – alternate positions to prevent pressure ulcers every 2 hours.
 - Use the bed cradle to prevent pressure on the flap.
 - Wash the flap daily with Hibiscrub to keep suture lines clean. Continue until 6 weeks have passed.
 - Abdominal binder will be used for 6 weeks to prevent Seromas and help with wound healing.
- **Week 3 – 6:**
 - After 3 weeks normal day-to-day activities may be resumed.
- **After 6 weeks:**
 - Sport activities and full mobilization may be resumed after 6 weeks.
 - If there are any concerns regarding the wound, please make an urgent appointment with Dr. J van Heerden.
- **After 3 months:**
 - Phone for a follow-up appointment with Dr. Johan van Heerden in order to plan for a revision procedure of the flap. The aim of this procedure is to improve the functionality of the relevant body region, by removing excess fat. This improves function and enables wearing of normal clothing.