

LABIAPLASTY AFTERCARE

The advice below is general and will apply to the average patient. It should be a guide. All patients are different, and some will recover quicker than others.

Before you leave the hospital

Medications - You will receive painkillers before discharge, including some numbing gel.

Dressings - We suggest using simple **pant liners** over your wounds. These should be changed regularly.

Follow-up appointments - An appointment will be made before you leave for a wound check with a nurse.

Have someone take you home after surgery.

When you get home

Week 1

Get plenty of rest.

Your labia minora will look very different right after surgery compared to what they will look like in a few weeks. Do not be alarmed by this!

Your mood may fluctuate after surgery, and you may have doubts about having had the procedure. Don't worry; this is not uncommon, and you will feel better as the pain and swelling ease and your wounds heal.

Walk gently as soon as possible; this helps to reduce swelling and lowers the chance of blood clots. **Do not overdo things.**

Blood staining on the inside of your dressings is expected during the first few days.

You will experience **discomfort and pain**, typically worse over the first 48 hours after surgery. These will ease gradually. **Take pain medication as prescribed**. If you have been provided with a numbing gel, you can use this as needed. Your requirement for painkillers should reduce after the first few days.

Showering/ bathing - You can shower once you are home and do this daily. Use a mild baby shampoo/ shower gel. Dry thoroughly with gentle patting with a towel and let the area get some air. It may help to have a warm salty bath for a short soak (no more than 15 minutes).

It may sting when you wee, and it is worth cleaning the area with **warm salty water** after going to the toilet.

Some patients will experience a lot of **swelling**, which can look dramatic during the first week. It may worsen before it improves and usually has improved by 7-10 days. Rarely, swelling may be caused by a small collection of blood. The affected area may feel hard and tender if so.

Cold compresses can be helpful in the first 48 hours. These should be used only with a thin pad/ undergarment between the wounds and the compress. Only use these while awake; never apply them directly onto your skin wounds.

Sleeping position - Sleep in a position comfortable for you.

Clothing - **Wear loose cotton underwear** and avoid tight-fitting trousers.

Tampons - **Avoid using tampons** for at least four weeks.

Follow a balanced diet. Decreased activity may promote constipation, so you may wish to add more raw fruit and fibre to your diet. Increase fluid intake. It is essential **to avoid constipation**, as straining may increase the risk of bleeding. It may help to take a gentle **laxative** such as Lactulose.

Avoid smoking for at least two weeks, as smoking delays healing and increases the risk of complications.

Avoid alcohol when taking pain medications. Even if you are not taking pain medications, it is advisable to avoid alcohol for three weeks as it can cause fluid retention, which may worsen swelling.

Nurse appointment at the end of week 1

We will usually arrange for you to be seen by the nurses 1 week after your surgery. This is to check that you are OK and have no problems. There are no stitches or dressings to remove. This appointment can usually be skipped for patients who live far away.

When can I go back to work?

Return to work will depend on your recovery and job. We recommend taking at least one week off work. You may need up to two weeks if your job involves lots of movement/ walking.

Week 2

You should be over the worst by the second week and walking easier.

Swelling and pain should also be much improved during the second week.

Driving – You should be able to resume driving.

Weeks 3 and 4

By the start of the third week, your wounds should be healed, and most of the swelling should be down.

Some patients may notice small openings and asymmetries. Any remaining raw areas will usually heal.

Your **dissolvable stitches** will still be visible, and these can cause some irritation. They should have disappeared by the end of week 4. If present, any remaining stitches will usually rub off.

1 month and onwards

You will feel back to normal after 1 month, and you can:

- Resume **light exercise** (use lubrication if required to stop rubbing) and build up to full exercise by 6 weeks.
- **Intercourse** - It is advisable to avoid intercourse for 4-6 weeks or until your wounds are healed. Use a good lubricant, and don't overdo things at first.
- **Holidays/ Travel** – We would advise allowing at least four weeks after your surgery before going on holiday. This is to allow for any unexpected problems that might occur with healing.

The appearance of your labia minora will look hugely better, and virtually all the swelling will have gone. You may have lumpy areas, which will settle over the coming months.

Scar care

Healing is gradual, and the area may remain slightly swollen and **sensitive** for several weeks. Any sensitivity usually resolves on its own. If your scars still feel sensitive after a few weeks, you can massage them gently to help desensitise the area.

When to call/ get in touch

- If you have increased swelling or bruising, which is not settling and feels hard and painful.
- Bleeding, which does not stop.
- If you have severe or increased pain not relieved by medication.
- If you have a temperature over 38 degrees Celsius.
- If you have any **persistent** yellowish or greenish discharge from the incisions.

If concerned, please get in touch with the hospital where your procedure was performed.

Further advice

If you are uncertain about anything or require further advice, please contact us at enquiries@quaba.co.uk