

Plastic Surgery

Optimizing Plastic Surgery Results: Easy Steps

by J. Timothy Katzen, MD

The five steps to optimize plastic surgery results include choosing your plastic surgeon wisely, increasing your protein intake, making sure you take your multi-vitamins and iron, and following your plastic surgeon's recommendations regarding scar management.

Dr. J. Timothy Katzen is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. He specializes in plastic surgery after weight loss and has offices in Beverly Hills and Hawaiian Gardens. To schedule an appointment, please call (888)KATZEN-0 or 310.859.7770. Also, please visit our new website at www.bodybykatzen.com and see if he is lecturing in a city close to you.

1 The single most important thing you can do to optimize your

postoperative plastic surgery wound healing results is your plastic surgeon selection. Correctly choosing your plastic surgeon is essential for optimal outcomes. Please do a little research. Since you are contemplating plastic surgery, it only makes sense that your surgeon should be a board certified plastic surgeon. Please check www.plasticsurgery.org for a list of plastic surgeons certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. In addition, verify that your plastic surgeon has a good reputation by checking the internet and your local medical board. You should choose a plastic surgeon that has a wealth of experience in treating patients after weight loss. He or she should have performed at least 100 of the procedures that you are contemplating in weight loss patients. Your plastic surgeon should be able to readily provide photographs of comparable surgeries in many weight loss patients. In addition, your plastic surgeon should provide names of numerous previous patients that you can contact. Also, check out your plastic surgeon's reputation in chat rooms and listings on established websites. Do not be tempted by price or possible discounts for media coverage. Plastic surgery is real surgery and if performed incorrectly, plastic surgery can have devastating outcomes. Again, correctly choosing your plastic surgeon is the single most important factor impacting your postoperative wound healing.

2 The second most important factor that dramatically impacts

postoperative wound healing is protein intake. Protein is the essential building block that allows wounds to heal following plastic surgery. I believe that correct nutrition is so essential for optimal healing, that I have a full-time registered dietitian in my private plastic surgery practice. She meets with all my patients, establishes nutritional needs, and helps optimize wound healing through proper diet. The

general recommendation for patients who have had gastric bypass surgery is a minimum of 1.2 grams of protein for every kilogram of adjusted ideal body weight. Because protein needs will increase with any surgery, I generally recommend patients consume at least 100 grams of protein a day for one month before surgery and one month after surgery. To meet your protein needs, it is important to consume protein from a variety of sources. High quality protein supplement consumption is essential.

3 The third most important component that contributes to

postoperative wound healing is the intake of high-potency multi-vitamins, calcium supplement with vitamin D, and folate supplements. In addition, my patients receive vitamin B12 shots both preoperatively and postoperatively.

4 The fourth essential element for optimal healing following plastic

surgery is the delivery of oxygen to healing tissue. Oxygen delivery is influenced by two key factors: hemoglobin and the blood vessels which deliver hemoglobin. Hemoglobin is essential for delivering oxygen to healing wounds and the main component of hemoglobin is iron. Thus, iron intake and absorption are critical. All my patients are required to take iron supplements. In addition to iron supplements, my patients are encouraged to choose foods high in iron such as lean red meat, spinach, and enriched cereals low in sugar and fat. All these sources increase iron levels. The other element for oxygen delivery is making sure the arteries are functioning well. Arterial blood flow and heart capacities can be optimized by exercise and smoking cessation. All my plastic surgery patients must increase exercise activities one month before plastic surgery and must have stopped smoking for at least six months.

5 The fifth element of optimizing plastic surgery results in scar

management. After your plastic surgery procedure is completed, I reduce resulting scars by applying my own silicone gel-based cream. This silicone mixture minimizes hypertrophic scars and keloids. In addition, I insist on my own custom made pressure garments to flatten scars and prevent scars from rising and becoming a keloid. Some of my garments even have silicone on the inside to assist in healing. However, the most important factor in minimizing scars is properly choosing your plastic surgeon.

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