

Richard Y. Ha, MD

Smoking / Secondary Smoking / Tobacco

Products and their affects on wound healing

All procedures in plastic surgery are performed to improve form and, in some cases, function. Our goal as Plastic Surgeons is to have a perfect form and scar. Unfortunately smoking and secondary smoke affect wound healing in a potentially devastating way. Any exposure to smoke, either directly or indirectly, can result in serious potential dangers such as; *poor wound healing, delayed wound healing, unsightly scarring, skin loss possibly necessitating skin grafting, increased risk of wound infection and loss of skin and deeper tissues. Decreased blood supply to targeted areas is the cause of these complications.* Nicotine is the root cause of the decreased blood supply in that it causes constriction of the capillaries and small blood vessels that feed the skin with its required oxygen. Nicotine patches therefore, can NOT be used as an alternative to smoking.

Smoking or exposure to second hand smoke can prolong healing three to four months, if not longer. Skin Loss may result in scabbing and prolonged need for dressing changes. Infection usually involves the need for antibiotics or a second surgery to drain the infection. Nipple loss and removal of implants due to infection are potential dangers when dealing with breast reduction, mastopexy or breast augmentations.

As your physician I am advising you, if you are smoking, using nicotine patches, gum or are in contact with secondary smoke within three weeks of any surgery, your surgery will be cancelled. There will be a nicotine test provided to insure optimum results during your surgery. Please be honest with us so we can take good care of you and help prevent any possible issues.

I have read the above information and have been informed of the issues of smoking, exposure to second hand smoke and nicotine effects on would healing from surgery.

Signature of Patient or Legal Guardian

Date

Name of Patient

Signature of Witness