

POST-SURGICAL RECOVERY GUIDE · 01

Lymphatic drainage after 360 lipo

You did the big one. Abdomen, flanks, back... all the way around.

And now you're swollen, tight, maybe a little lumpy, and wondering if this is normal.

It is. And the next eight weeks matter more than most people realise.

01

What's happening in your body

Your smallest lymph vessels live just under the skin, in the same fatty layer liposuction treats. With 360 lipo, that layer is disrupted all the way around your trunk at once. So there are fewer nearby "clear lanes" for fluid to drain into.

Think of it like rush-hour traffic. The highway isn't broken, there's just far more traffic than usual, and a lane or two closed for construction. You can't push traffic forward from the back. The cars at the front have to start moving first.

That's exactly how we work. We clear the main lymph nodes near your neck, armpits and belly first, then guide fluid from the treated areas toward them.

If fluid sits too long, it becomes a problem. Post-surgical fluid is rich in proteins. Left alone, it slowly thickens (think of Jell-O setting in the fridge) and can turn into firm, lumpy tissue called fibrosis. Early lymphatic care is one of the best ways to prevent it.

02

Your recovery timeline

WHEN	WHAT'S TYPICAL	HOW WE SUPPORT YOU
Days 1–4	Swelling and bruising build and peak. Drainage from incisions is common.	Rest, compression and walking. Pre-op session if booked.
Days 5–7	Swelling at its heaviest, tissue tender	First lymphatic session, with surgeon clearance
Weeks 2–4	Swelling eases but feels uneven. Some lumps normal.	2 sessions per week. Compression fit check.
Weeks 4–8	Swelling settling. Firm patches may appear.	Weekly sessions. Add gentle fibrosis work where needed.
Months 3–6+	Residual swelling, final contour emerging	Tune-ups as needed. Fibrosis follow-up.

03

Your Renu 360 lipo plan

Before surgery (optional, recommended). We recommend a session 24 to 72 hours before surgery to clear any existing puffiness and calm your nervous system, so you head into surgery rested.

First session: 5–7 days after surgery. This is the window we find works best for liposuction clients, once tenderness allows. Some surgeons prefer 7–14 days. We follow yours.

How many sessions? 360 lipo needs more support than single-area lipo. A trusted rule of thumb in post-surgical lymphatic care is roughly two hours of lymphatic work for every litre removed. A 4-litre procedure could mean around eight one-hour sessions over the first 6–8 weeks.

Every session includes:

- A quick check-in: swelling, pain, sleep, your compression, anything new
- Assessment of the tissue: soft, firm, fluid, fibrosis starting?
- Manual lymphatic drainage, starting centrally and working out
- Garment and foam check, and help getting back into compression
- Home-care coaching for the days ahead

04

What a session feels like

Light. Rhythmic. Surprisingly calming.

Lymph responds to very light pressure, about the weight of a nickel or a dime. More than that can actually squash the tiny vessels shut. So there's no deep pressure, no digging and no rubbing.

We start with deep belly breathing, which moves the largest lymph vessel in your body, then work the neck, armpits and belly before the treated areas.

Many clients fall asleep. Many need the washroom right after, or wake up to pee in the night. That's your body clearing the fluid. Some even

find their compression garment closes one hook tighter.

05

What we will never do

- Push fluid out through your incisions or re-open ports
- Use deep pressure, heat or aggressive tools on fresh tissue
- Start before your surgeon clears you
- Treat if you have signs of infection or a blood clot

If someone has offered you painful "drainage" through incisions, lymphatic experts are clear: that is not manual lymphatic drainage.

06

At home between sessions

- ☐ Wear your compression garment and foam exactly as prescribed. It holds the gains between sessions.
- ☐ Walk little and often. Your muscles are part of your lymph pump.
- ☐ Slow belly breathing, a few minutes several times a day
- ☐ Gentle shoulder and hip rolls to keep fluid moving
- ☐ Hydrate, and go easy on salt
- ☐ Skip heat packs, hot tubs and "lump-busting" devices in the early weeks

WHEN TO GET MEDICAL HELP

Call your surgeon if...

Watch for these warning signs after plastic surgery:

- Fever over 38°C, chills, a racing heart or sudden exhaustion
- Spreading redness, heat or red streaks
- Cloudy, coloured or foul-smelling drainage
- An incision that opens or won't close
- Skin that turns dark, dusky, purple or grey
- Pain that gets worse after it had been improving

Also call right away for sudden swelling in one leg or calf pain (possible clot), or chest pain or shortness of breath (call 911).

08 · QUESTIONS

Your questions, answered

How soon after 360 lipo can I get lymphatic drainage?

Usually 5–7 days after surgery, once your surgeon clears you.

How many lymphatic drainage sessions do I need after 360 lipo?

It depends on how much was removed. A common guide is about two hours of lymphatic work per litre removed, often 6–10 sessions over two months.

Does lymphatic massage after lipo hurt?

It shouldn't. The first few minutes can feel tender, and sensitivity usually eases as the session goes on. If you're flinching, the pressure is wrong.

Is lymphatic drainage after lipo worth it?

For large-volume or 360 lipo, most surgeons recommend it. It eases swelling and discomfort and helps prevent fibrosis, protecting the result you invested in.

Can I get lymphatic drainage before my surgery?

Yes. A session one to three days before surgery can reduce existing puffiness and help you relax.

What's the difference between lymphatic drainage and a regular massage?

MLD is feather-light and directional, following your lymph pathways toward healthy nodes. Regular massage works deeper into muscle, which isn't appropriate on swollen, healing tissue.

WHY RENU

Not all "lymphatic massage" is the same.

After surgery, you're trusting someone with healing tissue. Here's what you get at Renu.

Led by a Certified Lymphedema Therapist with 10 years' experience. Our post-op and lymphedema program is led by Meeghan Mackenzie, RMT since 2005 and a Certified Lymphedema Therapist since 2016. Meeghan earned her CLT through the Academy of Lymphatic Studies' 135-hour Complete Lymphedema Certification, which covers Manual Lymph Drainage and Complete Decongestive Therapy, the same standard used to treat lymphedema after cancer. She is one of roughly 350 CLTs in Canada.

Trained in the world's leading lymphatic methods. Beyond her CLT, Meeghan has trained in:

- Vodder Manual Lymph Drainage, the original method developed by Dr. Emil Vodder and the foundation of lymphatic therapy worldwide
- Földi, the German school behind Complete Decongestive Therapy, named for the Földi Clinic in the Black Forest, one of Europe's leading lymphology centres
- Chikly Lymph Drainage Therapy, which teaches therapists to feel the rhythm, direction and depth of lymph flow, map pathways by hand, and work with scar tissue and fibrosis

That combination lets us choose the right approach for your body and your surgery, not a one-size-fits-all routine.

Over 20 years of hands-on experience, with a clinical focus on oncology, lymphedema and surgical recovery.

Registered Massage Therapy receipts for your extended health plan.

Honest care. We tell you what lymphatic work can do, what it can't, and when you need your surgeon instead.

What to look for in any post-op therapist:

- A regulated health licence (in Alberta, an RMT, physiotherapist, OT or nurse)
- Formal lymphatic or lymphedema certification, not a weekend course
- Light, comfortable technique. If it hurts, it isn't lymphatic drainage
- No pushing fluid out of incisions
- Clear, published pricing, and willingness to work with your surgeon

FOR YOU TO KEEP

My recovery notes

Bring this page to your sessions. It helps us plan your care around your surgeon's instructions.

PROCEDURE

SURGERY DATE

SURGEON AND CLINIC PHONE

CLEARED FOR LYMPHATIC DRAINAGE ON

COMPRESSION INSTRUCTIONS

SESSION DATE	HOW I'M FEELING · NOTES



GIVE FRESH LIFE OR STRENGTH TO.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Had 360 lipo, or have it booked? Send us your surgery date and we'll map out your sessions.

Let's plan your recovery before the swelling plans it for you. Call 403-270-2111 or book a post-op lymphatic session with our lymphatic team, led by a Certified Lymphedema Therapist, at renu.janeapp.com.

BOOK ONLINE

renu.janeapp.com

VISIT

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EMAIL

admin@renuhealth.ca

CALL

403-270-2111

HOURS

Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 8:30 pm
Saturday and Sunday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

ONLINE

renuhealth.ca
[@renuhealthyc](https://twitter.com/renuhealthyc)

This guide is general education to support your recovery. It doesn't replace the advice of your surgeon or medical team. Always follow your surgeon's instructions, and seek medical care for any of the warning signs listed in this guide.