

GETTING READY FOR ABDOMINAL SURGERY

What to expect - You can expect to have bruising and swelling for several weeks. You will have drainage for several days.

6 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

Your surgeon may request you abstain from smoking and all tobacco products 6 weeks before and 6 weeks afterward. Failure to abstain from tobacco may result in your surgery being postponed or canceled as this complicates the healing process.

2 WEEKS BEFORE SURGERY

Medications - Discontinue Aspirin and Aspirin-like products, Ibuprofen (Motrin), Naprosyn (Aleve), Vitamin E tablets and certain herbs like Ginko Bilolba, St. John's Wort, Ephedra. If you take other herbs or vitamins, please phone our office. You may take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) for pain relief at any time.

Hospital Fees/Pre-admission appointment - Hospital fees are paid at the pre-admission appointment, which must occur before surgery, unless otherwise directed by your surgeon.

Surgeons fees - are due at this time unless otherwise covered by insurance.

BEFORE SURGERY

Diet - Do not eat or drink after midnight the evening before surgery, unless otherwise directed by the anesthesiologist.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

FIRST 24-48 HOURS AFTER SURGERY

- Your greatest discomfort will occur the first 24-48 hours following surgery.
- During this time, take all medication as prescribed. It is helpful to take pain medication with crackers or toast to avoid nausea which may occur if taken on an empty stomach. Also, if you are given additional prescriptive medication by your surgeon, please take as directed.

MEDICATION

- Avoid Aspirin and Aspirin products for 2 weeks after surgery. Tylenol (Acetaminophen) can be taken, but please limit Acetaminophen to 4gm (4000 mg) in a 24 hour period.

DIET

- Eat and drink easily digested foods such as Jell-O, ginger ale, soups, etc. These are tolerated well the first 24 hours after surgery. If you are not nauseous you may resume your normal diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids and eat fruit and high fiber foods to avoid constipation.

HYGIENE

- You may shower and wash your hair 48 hours after surgery. Pat incisions dry. No baths please.
- If drains are in place, remove dressing around drain and place antibiotic ointment (Polysporin/Neosporin) before showering. After showering, clean around drain with hydrogen peroxide and place Polysporin ointment and dry dressing.

ACTIVITY

- No lifting over 10 lb. until cleared by the doctor. Walk bent over until comfortable in an upright position.
- No driving for 1-2 weeks until cleared by the doctor and you have not taken prescriptive pain medication for 24 hours.
- When at home, take frequent rest periods - you may walk for short distances. Some walking is important to prevent clots from forming in your legs. Use comfort as your guide. If it hurts, back off some.
- Check with your doctor before resuming jogging, aerobics or any vigorous exercise.
- Do not drive while taking prescriptive pain medication. You must be off pain medication 24 hours before driving.
- Wait 3-6 weeks before resuming sexual activity.
- No heavy household chores.
- Avoid sunbathing for 2-4 weeks until cleared by the doctor.
- Refrain from smoking for 6 weeks as smoking retards the healing process.

WOUND CARE

- Suture lines and umbilicus should be kept clean and dry. You may clean these with hydrogen peroxide if drainage is present. A small amount of clear pink drainage is normal.
- If Steri-strips are present, leave them in place until the first post surgery visit. If Steri-strips come off, please contact our office for instructions.
- Change drain site dressings as needed. These areas may drain for several days. Clean around drain with hydrogen peroxide and place Polysporin ointment and dry dressing. If drainage is less than 30cc within 24 hours, please call our office for an appointment to have the drain removed.
- You may be placed in an abdominal binder (undergarment) following surgery. Wear this at all times with the exception of bathing or laundering of the garment. This pressure garment provides comfort and helps reduce swelling.
- If drains are in place, remove dressing around drain and place antibiotic ointment (Polysporin/Neosporin) before showering. After showering, clean around drain with hydrogen peroxide and place Polysporin ointment and dry dressing.

NOTIFY YOUR DOCTOR IF

- You have a fever of 101 degrees or more which lasts for 24 hours or longer.
- You develop any excessive swelling, redness or warmth of incisions.
- You experience severe pain not responding to prescribed pain medication.
- You develop thick, odorous drainage or bleeding that doesn't subside.
- You have any shortness of breath.

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