



DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER OPEN ABDOMINAL SURGERY

Incision:

- Remove band-aid/surgical tape and gauze dressing, if present, in 48 hours.
- Remove steri-strips (narrow white tape strips), if present, one week after surgery. Gently pull them off; they will not fall off by themselves. You may shower with the strips on.
- If clear skin glue is present over incision, leave it alone for one week. You may remove it thereafter.
- You may shower 24 hours after hospital discharge.
- Expect slight redness, swelling, and hardness around the incision. You may apply ice to the area during the first 48 hours after surgery. After 48 hours, you may then use a heating pad at medium setting or a warm compress for discomfort around the incision.

Activity:

- Gradually resume nonstrenuous activity such as walking over 48 hours.
- You may climb stairs but minimize number of trips.
- You may drive 3-4 days after your procedure if you're no longer taking prescription pain medication.
- No heavy lifting (anything over 10-20 lbs.) for 6 weeks.

Diet:

- Consume bland diet for 24 hours.
- Water consumption is strongly encouraged (4-6 tall glasses per day)

Follow-Up:

- If your post-op appointment hasn't already been made, please call the office to schedule.
- Your doctor will need to see you in 2-3 weeks after surgery.

FAQ

- Pain medications, especially narcotics, can cause constipation, so drink plenty of fluids while you are taking them. You may take an over-the-counter stool softener or laxative for relief. You may also experience nausea if pain medication is taken on an empty stomach.
- It is common to have a sore throat from the breathing tube that was placed during surgery. This discomfort should diminish within 24-48 hours.
- You may experience low-grade fever (99-100 degrees) from decreased activity after surgery.

**CALL THE OFFICE FOR TEMPERATURE OVER 101 DEGREES, PERSISTENT VOMITING,
UNCONTROLLED PAIN, AND SHORTNESS OF BREATH.**

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