

## INSTRUCTIONS AFTER SURGERY

### WOUND CARE AND RECOVERY

- If you have an outer dressing (band-aid or gauze), remove 2 days after surgery.
- If you have Steri-Strips (tape strips) or Dermabond (clear glue) these should stay ON until they fall off (2 weeks).
- If you have staples, they will need to be removed in 10 - 14 days.
- You may shower with soap and water and pat the wound dry. DO NOT SOAK IN A TUB until cleared by your surgeon.
- Do not use any ointments unless instructed by your surgeon.
- Moderate bruising, swelling and tenderness are normal. Discomfort in the shoulders/back is common after laparoscopic/abdominal surgery.

### DIET AND CONSTIPATION

- Your appetite may be decreased for a week or more. If you are not tolerating regular meals, try to eat small amounts or drink water or Gatorade every 2 - 3 hours.
- Drink enough water to stay hydrated. Avoid carbonated drinks (soda).
- Your intestines may not return to normal for 2 - 3 weeks. You may have diarrhea or constipation.
- To avoid constipation, drink plenty of water (8 – 10 glasses per day).
- If needed, you can take a stool softener or mild laxative (e.g., Milk of Magnesia or Miralax) once or twice per day with a glass of hot liquid (tea, coffee, etc.).

### PAIN MANAGEMENT AND MEDICATIONS

- Take your pain medication as prescribed. Ibuprofen (Motrin/Advil) or naproxen (Aleve) may also be taken as directed.
- DO NOT DRIVE while using prescription pain medication.
- DO NOT DRIVE OR MAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS for 24 hours after anesthesia or while taking prescription pain medications.

### ACTIVITY AND FOLLOW UP

- Avoid heavy lifting and sports until cleared by your surgeon.
- Take deep breaths and cough to prevent pneumonia. Splint (hug your abdomen) when coughing or sneezing.
- You should walk 5 - 10 minutes every hour that you are awake.
- **Contact your surgeon's office to make a follow-up appointment.**

### WHEN TO CALL THE SURGEON'S OFFICE

- Fever higher than 101 degrees.
- Redness or drainage of pus or bad-smelling liquid from the wound.
- Trouble passing urine (unable to "go", pain, or burning).
- Excessive swelling, bruising, pain, vomiting and/or severe diarrhea.

If you have any additional questions, please call our office at 303-812-6850.