

INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING HERNIA SURGERY

GENERAL

On the day of surgery, you should go home and rest for the remainder of the day. You will need to have a responsible adult with you on the first night at home. Due to the presence of anesthetic drugs, you should not make any major decisions for the first 48 hours. You are not allowed to drink alcoholic beverages, drive, or operate dangerous equipment while on any narcotic pain medications.

WOUND CARE

If your wounds are covered with a bandage you can remove it and shower 48 hours after surgery. You may have small white tapes covering the incision. You can shower with these in place and they will fall off on their own or be removed during your post-operative appointment.

If your bandage is skin glue, you may shower with this in place starting the morning after surgery. No additional bandages are needed. The glue will flake off in 7-10 days on its own.

Regardless of your dressing type, do not swim or bathe for 2 weeks after surgery, or until your wound has healed.

Things to watch for at the incision: fevers, increased pain, redness, swelling or any discharge are signs of a possible infection. Please call the office immediately if you experience any of these symptoms.

SCAR MANAGEMENT

Your scar will evolve over time, it takes time for them to become strong. Expect them to darken in the first 3-6 weeks. After that, they should lighten with time. It can take up to a year for a scar to fully mature. After your postoperative visit, you can use any non-fragranced, non-colored lotion such as Lubriderm, Neutrogena, Eucerin or Aquaphor, but it is not necessary. If your scar will be exposed to the sun, it is important to apply sunscreen.

ACTIVITY

One of the most important factors in preventing your hernia from coming back is to limit the amount of weight you are lifting after your hernia repair. In general, you should not be lifting anything greater than 20 pounds for 4 weeks following your surgery. Walking, bending, and even light jogging are all ok once your pain level is acceptable. Limit your exercise to walking in the immediate week following surgery.

MEDICATIONS

- Narcotic pain medication is available by prescription only. There may be a tendency to dizziness or nausea. The medication is best tolerated on a full stomach. Do not drive or drink alcohol while on narcotic pain medications.
- Ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) are all the same type of anti-inflammatory medication broken down in your kidneys. They are in the same class of medication as Aspirin. We recommend using 1-2 tablets (200mg each) every six hours for the first three days. After three days, use the medication only as needed. If you have a history of stomach ulcers, gastrointestinal bleeding, a history of kidney problems do not take these medications, instead, take only Tylenol.

- Tylenol (acetaminophen) is a pain reliever that is broken down in your liver. The recommended dose for Tylenol is 500 mg three times per day.
- Ibuprofen and Tylenol can be taken together safely. We recommend alternating the medications every 3-4 hours for best relief.
- Stool Softeners hydrate the stool by holding water. They have little laxative activity. Obtain the least expensive, once per day formulation (Colace is a common brand). If your bowel movements are very loose, stop the stool softener. If the bowel movement is too hard, you may add an additional dose in the evening.
- If your pain is not controlled with the combination of these drugs, please call the office.
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DIET

Narcotic pain medications can make you constipated, so it is important to take in plenty of fluids while on these pills. A balanced diet of lean meat, fish, vegetables and fruits is important to give you strength for the healing process.