

ABDOMINAL SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

This information is designed as a guideline to assist you in a speedy recovery from your surgery. Please follow these guidelines unless your physician has specifically instructed you otherwise. Please call our office nurse should you have any questions, and dial 911 for any medical emergency.

POST-OP APPOINTMENT:

Please call the office on the first working day after your discharge from the hospital to schedule a follow-up visit. This should be scheduled on the calendar for seven to fourteen days after discharge. Normal office hours are 8:30-5:30 Monday through Friday.

WOUND CARE:

If the metal clips or stitches closing your incision have not already been removed, they will be at your first office visit. If they have been removed, you may have small strips of tape over your incision. These strips will stay on for seven to ten days. They will fall off on their own, do not pull them off. You may shower using plain soap and water, no tub baths. Do not rub or scrub the incision, pat it dry. If you leave the hospital with a dressing in place you should continue dressing changes as instructed by your physician or the hospital nursing staff. If your dressing becomes wet or soiled, remove the dressing and reapply a clean dry dressing.

WHEN TO NOTIFY YOUR PHYSICIAN:

If your temperature is greater than 100.4 degrees more than six hours.
If you have increased redness or drainage from your incision, or it begins to separate
If you have pain unrelieved by pain medication and rest
If you experience shortness of breath and/or chest pain
Excessive bleeding that saturates your dressing

ACTIVITY:

No driving until cleared by your physician. Walking is good for you. Several short walks are better than one long one. Avoid prolonged sitting or standing. Take rest breaks as needed and elevate your legs above your heart level. No heavy lifting greater than ten pounds. You will experience pain in the post-op period. This is a normal part of the healing process. If you think that your swelling and pain is excessive, please call the office.

MEDICATIONS:

You may resume taking medication you were on prior to your surgery unless specifically instructed otherwise by your physician. Remember that narcotic pain meds can be constipating and you should increase the fluid and bulk foods in your diet. (Check with your physician if you have **fluid restrictions**.) If you feel that you

are constipated, do not strain at the toilet. You may use over the counter Metamucil or Milk of Magnesia. Appetite suppression may occur; this will improve with time. Eat small balanced meals throughout the day.

If your physician has prescribed Coumadin (warfarin), please let the office nurse know what dose you are on and when you are expected to have your blood work (protime) done. The nursing staff will contact you during the course of your coumadin therapy. **IF YOU ARE TAKING COUMADIN, PLEASE ASK TO SPEAK WITH THE OFFICE NURSE WHEN YOU CALL FOR YOUR FIRST POST-OP APPOINTMENT.**

- DO NOT DRIVE WHILE TAKING NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS
- DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL WHILE TAKING NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS
- PLEASE ALLOW 24 HOURS FOR MEDICATION REFILLS
- PLEASE HAVE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AVAILABLE WHEN YOU CALL REGARDING YOUR MEDICATION:

Name of Med _____

Your pharmacy phone number _____

Any allergies to any meds _____

Sue and Edie are our Tacoma office nurses at (253) 383-3325. Jeanne is our nurse in Puyallup at (253) 848-6693.