

Postoperative instructions - *Open abdominal surgery:*

These are procedures that are performed through a traditional larger incision. You may need a traditional incision for your operation to be done safely and effectively especially if you have had prior surgery.

Restrictions

- You may walk and climb stairs. We recommend lifting no more than about 10 pounds (1 gallon of water).
- You may shower (avoid soaking in water for more than 10 minutes)
- We recommend not driving or returning to work until you are seen for followup in the office

Things you can do

- Walking is permitted and encouraged
- Climbing stairs is permitted
- Light activity is permitted (*if it hurts than back off for a few days and gradually resume the activity*)
- You may shower or bathe but avoid soaking in the water for more than 10 minutes; it may cause incisions to break down.

Wound care

- If you have steri strips, keep them on until they fall off on their own (If one is falling off you may gently peel it off). You may keep them open to the air.
- If you have staples, you may place dry gauze over them with tape to prevent the staples from catching on your clothing or simply leave them open to the air.
- After you shower, pat the incision dry (Staples or steri strips)

Medications

- You will be given a prescription for pain medicine when you are discharged from the hospital. In addition to the prescription pain medicine that you were given, you may take Motrin, Advil, or ibuprofen at the same time. This often gives better pain relief than either one by themselves.
- Take Colace 100 mg 2 times daily while you are taking narcotic pain medicine
- Use of milk of Magnesia (or any other laxative) at the first sign of constipation

Diet

- After colon or rectal surgery, you will be given information regarding a low-residue or low fiber diet. You should use this as a guide for your diet. (this diet gives the colon less work to do and allows for better healing)
- We recommend small meals until your appetite increases. Be sure to keep yourself well hydrated.

Bowel movements and constipation

It is not unusual for your first bowel movement to be diarrhea, contain blood, contain pieces of tissue. Don't be alarmed. It is also common to become constipated after surgery. If you have already had a bowel movement, it is safe to take a laxative if you become constipated.

Call the office:

- You have worsening pain or increasing the amount of pain medication required
- persistent fever or chills (you may have low-grade fevers on and off for the days following surgery, this is your bodies normal reaction to surgery)
- Redness around the incision more than 1/2 inch on either side.
- Drainage of cloudy fluid or pus (drainage of a yellowish bloody fluid is normal)
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- To make a follow-up appointment in one to 2 weeks after surgery
- You have any other problems or concerns

Call our office with any questions or concerns

*Innovative Surgical Care
774-776-2991*