

## **What to Expect After Major Surgery**

After you arrive home from the hospital you should call our office within 24 hours to schedule your follow-up appointment and speak with a nurse to make sure all is going well. She can help to answer any questions you may have at that time.

Most patients are asked not to do any driving until their Doctor has seen them in the office after surgery. This may require some advanced planning to arrange for transportation to and from our office and for any personal needs such as grocery shopping.

Most patients will leave the hospital with either stitches or staples in their incision. You may shower or bathe over these without any concern. You do not have to keep your incision covered unless your Doctor has specifically requested that you do so. If you have a drain of any kind, please make sure to clarify with your Doctor if it is ok for you to shower. It is normal for your incision to drain a small amount of clear or dark red fluid for a few days after surgery. If this occurs you may cover your incision with a Band-Aid or dry gauze dressing.

Most patients are asked not to do any heavy lifting until their Doctor has seen them in the office. If you have small children or live alone, you may need to make arrangements for assistance. The general rule is not to lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk.

Do not be surprised if it takes your bowels a week or more to regulate. This simply is due to the surgical process. Feel free to try Milk of Magnesia 1-2 Tbsp. by mouth once in the morning and again at night to get your bowels to move. If you require more than this, let us know.

It is normal for you to experience some discomfort after surgery, but your prescription pain medication or extra strength Tylenol should control the majority of your pain. It is also normal to have a low-grade temperature (99-100.5 degrees) for a few days following surgery. If your fever goes above 101 or persists, please call our office. Also call if you experience nausea and vomiting, persistent diarrhea, uncontrolled pain, bright red bleeding or other symptoms that cause you concern. You may do all the walking that you want both on level ground and up and down stairs. We recommend that you not sit in one position for longer than 20 minutes. If you must sit for longer than this, get up and take a short walk periodically. Prolonged sitting does increase the risk of blood clots.

Feel free to call our office with any questions that you may have.

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