

## **AFTER YOUR SURGERY:**

1. Although each operation is different, there are some general guidelines that apply to most patients following surgery.
2. Unless otherwise instructed, you should be able to eat or drink without restrictions. If you have diabetes or are on a special diet, this may not apply to you. A glass of wine is usually not harmful EXCEPT if you are taking narcotics for pain (Percocet, Vicodin, Codeine, Tramadol).
3. Take scheduled non-narcotic pain medication for 2-3 days unless you are instructed otherwise. ***If there is no contraindication or documented allergy, the usually recommended schedule is 2 extra strength Tylenol tablets alternating with 3-4 ibuprofen tablets (600-800 MG) every 3 hours, always with a piece of toast or crackers. If you still experience severe pain, take the prescription narcotic pain medication, as needed and directed.*** Remember, narcotic pain medication should only be taken as needed for severe pain and if you already taken the scheduled non-narcotic pain medications. Pressure or discomfort does not warrant the use of narcotics. Narcotics may have serious side effects (constipation, dizziness, urinary retention, nausea, vomiting), may prolong your recovery and you are not allowed to drive if you take them.
4. If you are running out of pain medication and you feel that you need more, call during business hours our office. After hours or weekends, although we do our best to address your problem, you may experience significant delays, especially since we are not allowed to call in or electronically transmit narcotic pain medications, only signed prescriptions are accepted by the pharmacies by law.
5. Even the most minor surgical procedure is stressful to the body; you may feel quite tired even for several weeks after the operation. This is NORMAL, not a sign of trouble. If you get tired during the day, try to take a rest or a nap.
6. You should not drive for 7-10 days after any abdominal operation, since your reflexes are slowed due to incisional discomfort. You may, however, ride in a car. You may drive again as soon as you stopped taking narcotic pain medication and you feel safe enough to make a short stop with no hesitation. Always wear a seatbelt when driving or riding in a car.
7. Do not lift anything heavier than 5-10 pounds and avoid all straining if you have had an abdominal or groin operation until you see your doctor after the surgery.
8. If you have gone home with stitches or staples, they should be removed about one to two weeks after the surgery. Keep the wound clean. If your sutures have been removed, leave the Steri-Strips in place until they fall off by themselves. You may get the wound wet 48 hours after surgery.
9. Constipation is a frequent problem post-operatively, especially if you are taking any narcotic pain medication. Unless you experience diarrhea, taking a stool softener after leaving the hospital can greatly improve pain control and prevent constipation. Our recommended agent is Senokot S or its store brand equivalent (over the counter), 1-2 tablets twice a day for a week. If you do not have a bowel movement after one or two days at home, you may take a gentle laxative, either milk of magnesia or prune juice. Stop taking the stool softener if you develop diarrhea. If you begin to have severe pain, call us.
10. Walking is good exercise after your operation and will build up your strength. You are the best judge of what you can and cannot do. If something causes pain, stop immediately. Otherwise, feel free to do what you wish. Some increased discomfort is normal. As soon as you get home from the hospital, call our office for a follow-up appointment.
11. Feel free to call any time, should you have a problem, or call the office staff during business hours.