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Post-op Instructions for Hernia Repair Surgery

If you are having laparoscopic hernia repair you will have 3-4 small incisions on your abdominal area. With an open hernia repair, there will be a single abdominal incision. Both types of hernia repairs will be closed with internal stitches supported externally with steri strips and covered with gauze dressing or with staples. Staples will need to be removed by your physician 10 days after surgery.

- 48 hours after surgery you may remove the gauze dressing and shower allowing soap and water to run over the incision and pat dry. If steri strips (butterfly stitches) are on incisions, they will probably fall off within one week. If they do not fall off by themselves, you may peel them off.
- You may experience some discomfort at the incision site and surrounding areas. Your doctor will prescribe a pain medication. You may also use a heating pad on low setting for 10-15 minutes 2-3 times a day. For minimal discomfort, acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be used. Follow the instructions on the label.
- Your physician may use a PAIN PUMP to help control your pain postoperatively. This is an external device which connects to your wound through a catheter inserted into your wound. It is like a soaker hose and the pump puts a slow but steady flow of local anesthetic into the wound for the first 48 hours. This dramatically decreases the pain you may experience over the first two days. When it is empty you will discard it with your dressings. People have noted sometimes there is increased seepage of pink fluid into the dressing while pump is working: there is nothing to be alarmed about. When you remove the dressing on the second day, the catheter will be automatically removed with them. There will be NO discomfort with this. Once it wears off after 4-6 hrs the pump will run dry. Please start your pain medication to allow time to ease off the pain pump.
- You may notice pink fluid on the dressing (gauze bandage). This is normal. Put a dry gauze over the dressing and tape it down.
- If you experience constipation, take milk of magnesia or a mild laxative and drink plenty of fluids especially water.

- With inguinal hernia repairs, you may have some scrotal swelling. A scrotal support may be used when you are up walking or standing for an extended period of time. You may also use an ice bag for the first 48 hours to help relieve swelling.
- You may experience some numbness and tingling around the incisional areas. This is due to swelling which causes pressure on the surrounding nerves. Using ibuprofen may help decrease the swelling. If numbness and tingling does not subside within 7 days, call our office.
- Some bruising may occur. This is normal and will gradually fade.
- Physical activities should not include any heavy lifting greater than 25 pounds and no pulling or pushing until discussed with your doctor during the first follow-up visit.
- You should be able to return to work within 7-10 days and resume driving approximately 5 days after surgery unless you are still taking prescription pain medication, still experiencing pain or a lot of soreness.
- You should schedule a follow-up appointment with your doctor for 7-14 days after surgery unless instructed differently by your physician.
- Call the office at one of the phone numbers of the next page for the following signs and symptoms:
 - o Increased redness or swelling beyond incision
 - o Any drainage from incision
 - o Temperature above 101 degrees
 - o Persistent nausea and/or diarrhea
 - o Difficulty urinating.