

AFTER SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS

USE ONLY THESE INSTRUCTIONS **INSTEAD** OF THE DISCHARGE PAPERWORK FROM THE HOSPITAL
UNLESS YOU WERE ADVISED DIFFERENTLY BY OUR DOCTOR.

IF YOU WERE GIVEN PRESCRIPTIONS, PLEASE USE THEM AS DIRECTED.

PLEASE CONTACT OUR NURSE JIMMIE WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR
CONCERNS.

941-484-3404 EXT 230

MEDICATIONS:

Resume all your medications from before surgery **except blood thinners**, unless instructed otherwise.
Use any new prescriptions from the hospital as written on the bottle.

COMMON NORMAL SYMPTOMS IN THE FIRST 1-2 WEEKS:

Minor swelling of the wound, pain and numbness in or around the incision, bruising, minor swallowing problems and difficulty sleeping.

If you had spine surgery, milder forms of the same symptoms you had before surgery are also common, as is mild numbness, tingling or pain in the arm (neck surgery) or leg (low back surgery).

Constipation can become a huge issue if not addressed when you realize you haven't had a bowel movement. Use your laxative of choice i.e. Milk of Magnesia, Ducolax (pill or suppository), Miralax or Fleet enema. Remember stool softeners will **not** make your bowels move they only soften the stool. Prune juice will usually help prevent constipation along with plenty of liquids, fruits and vegetables. Consult your pharmacist for other over-the-counter remedies.

SYMPTOMS THAT SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE PHYSICIAN/ NURSE IMMEDIATELY:

- **DRAINAGE FROM THE WOUND**
- **LACK OF FUNCTION (SUCH AS LACK OF BLADDER OR BOWEL CONTROL, LEG OR ARM "GIVING OUT")**
- **PAIN THAT IS WORSE THAN BEFORE SURGERY**

ACTIVITY:

Do not do anything strenuous for 2 months after surgery. No bending, twisting, lifting more than ten pounds or doing anything that causes you to strain. Use your “common sense”. Discuss other activities with the Doctor at your next visit.

WOUND CARE:

Three days after surgery the dressing can be removed. If the wound is dry leave the dressing off. Sterile gauze from the drug store may be applied loosely if clothing is uncomfortable. After you have removed the dressing you will be able to see whether you have staples, sutures (stitches of thread) or Steri-strips (tiny strips of tape). It is normal to have dried blood on the Steri-strips. **Do not** remove or change the Steri-strips, they will fall off on their own. Once you have determined what wound closure was used you should call the office and speak to one of our representatives to schedule a post-operative appointment.

Do NOT allow anyone (including the home health nurse) to remove your staples or stitches, as we will remove them. Skilled nursing facilities will be given an order from our office if we want them removed at the facility.

If you have any drainage from your wound please notify our nurse Jimmie immediately, or the on call physician if our office is closed.

Keep your wound dry until staples or stitches are removed. However, you may shower and shampoo starting 2 days after surgery. **DO NOT** submerge the wound in a bath tub, pool or hot tub.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS:

After the dressing has been removed **call our office at 941-484-3404** to schedule your follow up appointment. You will be asked whether you have staples, sutures or Steri-strips. This will determine when your follow up appointment will be made. Staples have to stay in at least 7 to 10 days not counting the day of surgery and sutures up to 14 days not counting the day of surgery and patients with Steri-strips will generally be seen in 14 days (not counting the day of your surgery).