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Division of General & Gastrointestinal Surgery

*PATIENT DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING*

## APPENDECTOMY

### DIET

- ✓ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ✓ Unless otherwise directed, you may resume your regular diet. Bland, low-fat foods for the first week will settle in your stomach better.
- ✓ Your appetite may be less than normal. Eat when you are hungry. Do not force yourself to eat! Concentrate on fluids. It is important to stay hydrated.

### ACTIVITY

- ✓ Do NOT drink alcohol, drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours after your surgery or while taking pain medication
- ✓ Do NOT do heavy lifting (nothing more than a gallon of milk) for 2-3 weeks after your surgery.
- ✓ Light activity (i.e. walking, office work, climbing stairs, etc.) as soon as you feel comfortable is fine. Sexual activity is fine as soon as you feel comfortable.
- ✓ You may feel fatigued for a few weeks after surgery. Take a nap when you feel tired. However, do NOT stay in bed all day. Make sure you walk around every two hours.

### PAIN MANAGEMENT

We will supply you with a prescription for a mild narcotic pain medication. You are not required to take it. If you do take it, please do not drive or drink alcohol as these in combination may make you drowsy. Alternatively, you may take Tylenol (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen (e.g. Advil) as needed.

### MEDICATIONS

- ✓ Unless otherwise directed, you may resume your medications.
- ✓ If constipation occurs, Psyllium (i.e. Metamucil) is the best remedy (follow the directions on the package. If constipation persists more than 5 days, you may wish to take an ounce of milk of magnesia.
- ✓ If you were prescribed antibiotics, take them until they are finished.

## INCISION CARE

- ✓ Your incision(s) may be covered with a waterproof dressing (Tegaderm) and “Steri-strips” (Little strips of tape). The steri-strips will fall off by themselves. If after 10 days they have not fallen off, you may remove them yourself.
- ✓ Take the Tegaderm off if there is a lot of drainage under it or after 48 hours.
- ✓ You may take a shower.

## WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

- ✓ If you have an increase in pain over several days that is persistent.
- ✓ If you have new redness or swelling of the wound(s).
- ✓ If you have a sudden increase in wound drainage, especially if it has pus or a foul odor.
- ✓ If you develop a fever  $>101^{\circ}$  F
- ✓ Persistent vomiting or diarrhea

## FOLLOW UP

- ✓ Please call the first business day after discharge to schedule a follow-up appointment.
- ✓ In case of emergencies, call your doctor’s office. If the office is closed, contact the hospital operator at **(617) 726-2000** and have your surgeon or the surgeon-on-call paged.