



Division of General & Gastrointestinal Surgery

PATIENT DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING

LAPAROSCOPIC HERNIA REPAIR

DIET

- ✓ Unless otherwise directed, you may resume your regular diet. Eat whatever seems to agree with you best.
- ✓ 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.
- ✓ 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 resume exercise such as running or biking 7 days after your surgery.
- ✓ Do NOT do heavy lifting (nothing more than a gallon of milk) for 10 days after your surgery.
- ✓ You may feel fatigued for a few weeks after surgery. Take a nap when you feel tired.

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. 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 may be covered with a waterproof dressing (Tegaderm). Change the dressing if it fills with blood or fluid. Change the dressing after two days. Gently cleanse the skin around the incision daily with mild soap and water.

- ✓ You may take a shower at any time. After your shower, pat the wound dry.

COMMON PROBLEMS

- ✓ It is common to see bulging at the site of your previous hernia. This is because the hernia sac is filling with fluid. Your body will absorb this and the swelling will go away after several weeks.
- ✓ Bruising involving the penis or scrotum in men or genitals in women may also occur. This is not dangerous and is because of a small amount of blood lost during surgery.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

- ✓ If you develop a fever $>101^{\circ}$ F
- ✓ If you have a lot of swelling or bleeding.
- ✓ If you have a sudden increase in wound drainage, especially if it has pus or a foul odor.
- ✓ 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.