



Division of General & Gastrointestinal Surgery

PATIENT DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING

INCISIONAL HERNIA

DIET

- ✓ Unless otherwise directed, you may resume your regular diet. Bland, low-fat foods for the first week will settle in your stomach better.

ACTIVITY

- ✓ Do NOT drink alcohol, drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours after your surgery or while taking pain medication.
- ✓ You should get up and walk around as much as possible. The more you do, the faster you will get better.
- ✓ Do NOT do heavy lifting (nothing more than a gallon of milk) for 6 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.

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). Or you may wish to take an ounce of milk of magnesia.
- ✓ If you were prescribed antibiotics, take them until they are finished.

INCISION CARE

- ✓ It is normal to have some bruising around the incision.
- ✓ You may have a drain in your incision. Your doctor will tell you when this will be taken out.
- ✓ You MAY take a shower, but avoid baths and saunas for 2-3 weeks after surgery.
- ✓ You may be instructed to wear an abdominal binder following surgery. Your surgeon will tell

you how long this will be required.

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.