

Post-Operative/ After Surgery Instructions

Medication

- You will be given a prescription for pain medications upon discharge from the hospital. Please understand that certain prescription pain medications require an original written prescription and cannot be called into your pharmacy.
- Medication refill requests will not be processed over the weekends or holidays.
- Medication refill requests will be addressed during our regular clinic hours.
- Please wait on resuming your regular medications (including vitamins) until your post-operative appointment.

Because Dr. Lim is in the office twice a week, please allow up to 5 business days for your prescription refill request to be processed. Our office will call you once your prescription is ready. You may pick up the prescription during our regular office hours or we will mail the prescription to your home.

Incision Care

- Leave the bandage in place for 3 days.
- After 3 days, remove the dressing and leave the incision open to air. (If not already done in the hospital)
- You may shower post-op day # 3. (Do not scrub the incision)
- **Avoid** tub baths or pool immersion until seen by the surgeon at the first post-operative appointment.
- **Do not** apply creams/ointments to the incision unless instructed to do so.

For Sutures/Staples:

- You may wash with a damp cloth gently around the incision.
- Sutures/Staples will be removed at your first post-operative visit.
- Do not** resume any blood thinners until discussing it with your surgeon at the first postoperative visit.

For Absorbable Sutures:

- Do not** remove steri-strips; allow them to fall off naturally.
- After showering, gently pat dry the incision.

Activity

- Walking is encouraged.
- No** driving until after your follow-up appointment & off of narcotic pain meds.
- Avoid** bending, lifting or twisting during the initial post-operative period.
- Do not** lift objects greater than 5 pounds.
- Await instructions at your first follow-up visit regarding resuming activities other than walking.
- Wear your brace as directed.

You may experience:

- **Constipation:** This is a common problem after surgery due to anesthesia and pain medications. Please make sure you drink plenty of fluids, preferably water. You may also use a fleet enema which can be purchased at local drug stores.
- **Fever:** In the first few days following your surgery, low grade fevers are common and are usually not a sign of infection. *The fever will typically resolve on its own although Tylenol can be taken as needed.*
- **For spine surgery patients:** numbness (thigh, foot, hands) and changes in temperature of hands and feet are common symptoms after the surgery.

Post-operative pain management:

- Please do not take any additional pain medications other than the ones that were prescribed to you or unless you were instructed to do so.
- Ice packs may be used to supplement pain medication.

Office Hours: Monday – Friday || 9 am – 4 pm

Please contact the office during our regular clinic hours for:

Persistent fever greater than 101.5 F after treatment with Tylenol.

Thick/opaque and/or foul-smelling drainage from your incision.

Pain, swelling, and redness at the incision or surrounding area.

❖ **Outside of our regular clinic hours, please proceed to Reston Hospital or Inova Fairfax Hospital Emergency Department for the concerns listed above.**

❖ **The Emergency Department will contact the surgeon if appropriate.**

If you have any additional questions, please contact our office at 703) 876-4270.