

Your Recovery and Discharge

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Avoid driving

Thinking Clearly

If general anesthesia or Monitored Anesthesia Care is given, it may cause you to feel different for 2 to 3 days. Do not drive, drink alcohol, or make any big decisions for at least 2 days.

Nutrition

When you wake up from anesthesia, you will be able to drink small amounts of liquid. If you do not feel sick, you can begin eating regular foods.

Continue to drink about 8 to 10 glasses of fluid per day.

Eat a high-fiber diet.

Activity

Slowly increase your activity. Full activity may usually be resumed in 1-2 weeks for laparoscopic and 2-3 weeks for open procedures.

Persons sexually active before the operation reported being able to return to sexual activity in 14 days (average).

Do not strain or lift objects over 10 pounds or participate in strenuous activity for at least 2 weeks.

Your surgeon will give you instructions on when to resume activity.

Work and Return to School

You can go back to work when you feel well enough. There is a wide range of time needed for recovery. The average time to return to work is 14-21 days. Discuss the timing with your surgeon.

Wound Care

Always wash your hands before and after touching near your incision site.

Do not soak in a bathtub until your stitches, steri-strips, or staples are removed. You may take a shower after the second postoperative day unless you are told not to.

Follow your surgeon's instructions on when to change your bandages.

A small amount of drainage from the incision is normal. If the dressing is soaked with blood call your surgeon.

If you have steri-strips in place, they will fall off in 7 to 10 days.

Avoid wearing tight or rough clothing. It may rub your incisions and make it harder for them to heal.

Protect the new skin, especially from the sun. The sun can burn and cause darker scarring.

Your scar will heal in about 4 to 6 weeks and will become softer and continue to fade over the next year.



Steri-strips will fall off or they will be removed during your first office visit



Wash your hands before and after touching near your incision site

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Bowel Movements

- Avoid straining with bowel movements by increasing the fiber in your diet with high-fiber foods or over-the-counter fiber medications such as Metamucil and Fibercon.

Pain

- The amount of pain is different for each person. For adults, the average time narcotics were used was 3 days with some patients needing no additional pain medication. You can use throat lozenges if you have pain from the tube placed in your throat during your anesthesia.

Home Medications-Pain

The medicine you will need after your operation is for pain control.

When to Contact Your Surgeon

If you have:

- Pain that gets worse
- Pain that will not go away
- A fever of more than 101°F
- Vomiting
- Swelling, redness, bleeding, or bad-smelling drainage from your wound site
- Strong or continuous abdominal pain or swelling of your abdomen
- No bowel movement 3 to 4 days after the operation

Pain Control

Everyone reacts to pain in a different way. A scale from **0** to **10** is used to measure pain. At a “**0**”, you do not feel any pain. A “**10**” is the worse pain you have ever felt.

Extreme pain puts extra stress on your body at a time when your body needs to focus on healing. Do not wait until your pain has reached a level “**10**” or is unbearable before telling your doctor or nurse. It is much easier to control pain before it becomes severe.