

Appendectomy Discharge Instructions

Care of the Surgical Site:

- Your Surgeon may “open” the area or use a “laparoscope” to remove your appendix.
- Regardless of the method used, the dressing(s) are to remain on for 3 days, unless otherwise instructed. You may have steri-tapes on your incision(s), let them fall off on their own (usually in about 7 days). It is important to keep the dressing(s) clean and dry until they are removed.
- When the dressing(s) are removed, you may shower (usually in 3 days).
- No baths or swimming until the incision(s) have healed (usually in 10 days), or until discussed with your surgeon.
- When showering, gently wash around the incision(s), then pat dry. Do not wash directly on the incision(s). If there is any drainage present, you may cover the incision(s). After 7 days there is usually no need to do this.
- Always keep the incision(s) clean and dry.
- While traveling in a vehicle, use a pillow between your operative site and seat belt for more comfort.
- Avoid constipation and straining to have a bowel movement.
- Take any prescribed medication as directed.

Diet:

- There is no change in diet required. Eat lighter foods the day of your surgery. Examples: soup, toast, tea, ginger ale.
- If you become nauseated and/or are vomiting, take anti-nausea medication (Gravol) and switch back to liquid and lighter foods. You can gradually move back to your usual diet once the nausea has been relieved.
- To prevent constipation, drink plenty of fluids. Try to include 3-5 8 ounce glasses of water daily and increase your fibre intake with fruits, vegetables and bran. If you have a stool softener on your prescription, take it as directed.

Activity:

- No driving for 24 hours after surgery. If your pain medications make you drowsy, do not drive.

- On the day of surgery, you will be resting in the hospital. When you go home, you must stay mobile. Walking is good exercise, but nothing too strenuous. When you are lying or sitting down, do leg and breathing exercises every hour while you're awake, just like you did while resting in the hospital. Use a pillow on your incision when you need to cough.
- Avoid lifting more than 5 kg/10 lbs. or strenuous activities (gardening, exercise etc.) for about 6-8 weeks.

Follow-Up:

- You will need to arrange your first follow-up appointment. The contact information will be given to you before you go home.
- Discuss returning to work and any restrictions you have at this appointment.

CALL YOUR SURGEON OR GO TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT IF YOU HAVE:

- Fever or chills (temperature of 38.5 C/101 F or higher).
- Bleeding that does not stop after 5 minutes of firm pressure being applied to the incision.
- Severe diarrhea (explosive watery stool).
- Nausea and/or vomiting that is not relieved by anti-nausea medication (Gravol).
- Pain that is not relieved by the prescribed pain medication when taken as directed.
- A red, swollen, or painful incision with yellow-green pus coming from it, or the incision breaks open.
- You haven't had a bowel movement in 3 or more days and your abdomen is becoming bloated and uncomfortable.
- You haven't been able to urinate in over 6-8 hours and are becoming uncomfortable.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO REACH YOUR SURGEON, go directly to the Emergency Department for medical attention.