

Open Cholecystectomy Discharge Instructions

Care of the Surgical Site:

- There will be at least one dressing on your abdomen that must remain on for 3 days, unless you are otherwise instructed. It is important to keep them clean and dry until you remove them.
- You will notice when you take the dressings off that there may be tapes over the incisions. These will fall off on their own, usually in a week. If they become loose and are no longer over the incisions, you may remove them.
- When the dressings are removed you may shower. No baths or swimming until the incisions have healed (usually 10 days).
- When showering, gently wash around the incisions, then pat dry. Be sure not to wash the incisions directly.
- If there is any drainage present, you may cover the incisions. After 7 days there is usually no need to cover.
- Always keep incisions clean and dry.
- While traveling in a vehicle, put a pillow between your abdomen and the seat belt for more comfort.

Diet:

- Eat lighter foods on the day of your surgery. Examples: soup, toast, tea and ginger ale.
- There is no specific diet to follow, but try and stay away from fatty, spicy and fried foods.
- If you become nauseated and/or are vomiting, take anti-nausea medication (Gravol), and switch back to liquids 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 including 3-5 8 ounce glasses of water daily. Increase your fibre intake with fruits and bran. If you have a stool softener prescribed, take it as directed.

Activity:

- No driving for 24 hours after your surgery. If your pain medication makes you drowsy – do not drive.
- On the day of your surgery you will go home and rest. The activity of walking around your home is sufficient for the first day. When you are lying or sitting down, do leg and

breathing exercises at least every hour while awake. Use a pillow on your abdomen when you need to cough.

- Stay mobile. Walking every day is good exercise – but nothing too strenuous. Increase the distance as you can tolerate.
- You will continue to improve and get better each day, and will be able to return to most of your normal activities within a week.
- No heavy lifting over 5 kg /10 lbs. or strenuous activities (gardening, exercising, vacuuming etc.) until you have spoken to your Surgeon at the first post-op appointment.

Follow-Up:

- You will need to arrange your own first post-op appointment. The contact information will be given to you before you go home.
- Discuss when you can return to your usual activities e.g. work, and any restrictions you may 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.
- Nausea and/or vomiting that lasts more than 24 hours and is not relieved by an anti-nausea medication (Gravol).
- Severe abdominal pain that is not relieved by the prescribed pain medication when taken as directed.
- Chest pain or shortness of breath.
- A red and painful incision with yellow-green pus coming from it.
- The incision breaks open.
- Bloating and discomfort in the lower abdomen with no urination for 6-8 hours.

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