

Post-op Umbilical Hernia Care



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POST-OPERATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR UMBILICAL HERNIA SURGERY

The following instructions are meant to speed your recovery time, as well as comfort. If you have any questions regarding any of these instructions, please feel free to contact your doctor.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

Most patients will experience some swelling and bruising of the belly button. Ice packs and reclining will help. Swelling and bruising can take several days to resolve, but increasing redness or cloudy pus drainage should be treated by the surgeon.

MEDICATIONS

A prescription for pain medication is given to you upon discharge. Take your pain medication as prescribed. You may take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil) as needed once you're no longer taking prescribed pain medication.

Take your usually prescribed medications unless otherwise directed. It is common to experience constipation if taking pain medication after surgery. Increasing fluids and taking a stool softener will usually help lessen or prevent this from occurring. A mild laxative (Milk of Magnesia is recommended) may be taken if no bowel movement after 48 hours.

WOUND CARE

Unless discharge instructions indicate otherwise, you may remove the clear plastic dressings (Tegaderm) and gauze two days after surgery. Showers are permitted from the day after surgery (no baths). You may have steri-strips (small skin tapes) in place directly over the incision. These strips should be left on the skin for seven – 10 days. The surgeon may use glue on the incision, in this case there will not be steri-strips on the wound. The glue will flake off in seven - 14 days. It is okay to shower and get the glue wet 24 hours after surgery.

DIET

You should follow a light diet the first 24 hours after surgery, such as soup, crackers, pudding, etc. Resume your normal diet the day after surgery.

ACTIVITY

You may resume light daily activities beginning the next day – such as daily self-care, walking, climbing stairs – gradually increasing activities as tolerated. You may have sexual intercourse when it is comfortable (usually two weeks). **Refrain from any heavy lifting or straining until approved by your doctor** (generally a 15-pound lifting restriction for three weeks).

You may drive when:

- You no longer are taking prescription pain medication
- You can comfortably wear a seatbelt
- You can safely maneuver your car and apply brakes

SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

Please contact your doctor if you experience any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 100.5° F or higher
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Inability to urinate
- Continued bleeding from incision
- Increased pain, redness, or drainage at the incision site

FOLLOW-UP

You should see the surgeon in the office for a follow-up appointment approximately in 10-14 days after your surgery. Make sure you call for this appointment within a day or so after your surgery to ensure a convenient appointment time.