



**Colorectal Center of San Diego, Inc.**

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## **DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING OUTPATIENT ANORECTAL SURGERY**

### **Day of Surgery**

- Limit your fluid intake to water and Gatorade, and do not drink more than to satisfy your thirst until you urinate for the first time after surgery. Once you have urinated after surgery, you should drink plenty of non-carbonated, non-sweetened, caffeine-free fluids to keep yourself well hydrated.
- Do not sit on a donut pad.
- If you have a dressing, remove it the first time you go to the restroom. There will likely be a moderate amount of blood on it, so do not be surprised. You may place a piece of gauze on your undergarments to keep them from getting any drainage on them if you wish, but it is not necessary.
- Light drainage (blood, straw-colored fluid, clear fluid) is normal for 5-7 days after surgery, and in some patients it may occur for 2 weeks after surgery.
- Pain is normal and to be expected after surgery as this is a very sensitive area with more nerve endings than other parts of our body. Take your pain medication as prescribed by your physician. The pain medication may not completely remove your pain, but it should at least make your pain tolerable. Other methods to help relieve your pain include soaking in warm sitz baths (basin/tub filled with warm water) for 15 minutes every few hours as needed.
- Limit your food intake to fluids and light snacks for today.
- If you have not urinated for 8-12 hours after surgery, sit in a warm sitz bath (tub/basin of water) for 20 minutes or stand in a warm shower to help yourself urinate. If it has been more than 12 hours since your surgery was completed, you have not urinated, and you are experiencing discomfort proceed to the emergency room for an evaluation.

### **Beginning the Day After Surgery**

- Call to schedule your follow up appointment with your surgeon. You should try to schedule the appointment for 2 4 6 weeks after surgery.
- You may resume a normal diet once you are able to tolerate a light snack without nausea.
- Take fiber supplements (Konsyl, Metamucil, Citrucel, etc.) with a full glass of water before each meal for the next 4 weeks.
- Increase your activity level as tolerated, but avoid heavy straining for 10 days after surgery, unless approved by your surgeon.
- Soak in a sitz bath (tub/basin of warm water) for 15 minutes before each bowel movement until you no longer have pain with your bowel movements, which may take up to 2 weeks for some people. The warm water serves to relax your pelvic muscles, thus decreasing your pain. You can also soak in a sitz bath after moving your bowels if you need it.
- Drink plenty of fluids when taking pain medication. Keep your stools soft in order to minimize your pain when moving your bowels. Expect to have pain when moving your bowels for up to 2 weeks after surgery. You have the ability to decrease this pain by drinking more than your usual amount of water and taking over the counter fiber supplements (Konsyl, Metamucil, Citrucel, etc.) before each meal. Remember to drink more than your usual amount of water to allow the fiber to work.
- Do not take any aspirin-containing products for 10 days after surgery unless cleared by your surgeon.

- You may see some blood on the toilet paper for 3-5 days after surgery. You may even see drops of blood in the toilet bowl. If you look down and notice that the toilet water is all red, do not be shocked because it only takes a few drops of blood to make all the water in the toilet bowl red. Most bleeding will subside on its own within a few hours. If you are still worried about the amount of bleeding sit on an ice pack (make sure the ice pack is situated so it is in contact with your anus) on the couch for 30 minutes. You can repeat this as often as necessary. If sitting on the ice pack is too painful, you can lie on your side and situate the ice pack between your buttocks.
- You may begin walking the day after surgery, but do not participate in vigorous physical activity unless approved by your surgeon prior to going home.
- You may begin resuming strenuous activity 10 days after your surgery as tolerated as long as you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications.
- You may begin driving once you have stopped taking narcotic pain medications.
- If you are experiencing discomfort and are having difficulty moving your bowels there are a number of methods you can try- fiber, Miralax, Colace, Dulcolax, 6 teaspoons of Milk of Magnesia, Senokot, etc. First and foremost, assess your water intake for the day because dehydration can make it difficult to move your bowels. Drink two 8 oz glasses of water and take an over the counter fiber supplement (Konsyl, Metamucil, Citrucel, BeneFiber, etc.). If this doesn't produce a result within an hour, take Miralax per the instructions on the container. If the Miralax doesn't produce a result within an hour repeat the dose. If this doesn't work, you should take one of the other medications mentioned above (Colace, Dulcolax, 6 teaspoons of Milk of Magnesia, Senokot) and wait a few hours.

#### **Call Your Surgeon If.....**

- your temperature is consistently above 101.3<sup>0</sup> F, and you are experiencing chills or sweating without physical activity.
- your pain medication does not decrease your pain level to a tolerable level.
- you have bleeding for more than 6 hours continuously from your wound that you are unable to stop using the methods mentioned above.
- you have so much bleeding that you are becoming lightheaded, dizzy, experiencing chest pains, or discomfort.
- you are unable to move your bowels despite following the instructions above and are experiencing pain as a result.