



PO ABDOMINAL SURGERY

Showering and incision care

- You may start to shower 48 hours after surgery. However, you will need to wait until the sutures are removed before soaking the incision in a bathtub or pool.
- Tegaderms, a clear plastic tape, and glue are placed on the incisions. You may use soap and water over these and dab the area dry. With time as they begin to peel, trim only the peeled portions. Do not remove the entire tape unless it is loose.
- You may have steristrips over your incision. Keeping these paper tapes on the incision for 4-6 weeks will significantly improve the quality of the final scar.
- You may resume normal activity in 4 to 6 weeks.

Using an abdominal binder

Cover the incision with gauze before putting the binder on. You can put on a t-shirt or tank top and then put the binder on over. Do not let the binder touch your incision for 3 weeks after surgery. Wear the abdominal binder at all times after surgery except when you shower until the doctor states otherwise. You may wash the binder if it becomes soiled, you may want to order an additional binder through Amazon to have when washing the binder.

Activity

- Exercise your lower extremities while you are in bed. This will reduce the risk of developing blood clots in your legs.
- Flex and point your feet
- Do ankle rolls
- Bend and straighten your knees
- Do this several times a day until you are walking as much as usual.
- You may walk and climb stairs as soon as you feel fit to do so without any restrictions.
- You should do breathing exercises for one week after surgery or until you are able to get up and walk around comfortably. This is to prevent pulmonary complications of general anesthesia.
- Do not lift anything over 10 pounds for 4 weeks after surgery.
- Do not take part in sports or any strenuous activities for 6 weeks after surgery

Sun and heat exposure

Your surgery will leave a scar and it may take well over a year to fade and blend in with surrounding skin. No matter how small the scar, sunlight can cause permanent darkening of your scar. Sunlight can even go through your clothes.

Do not expose your incision/scar to direct sunlight for a year from the time of surgery. Use sunscreen with a SPF for at least 30 when you go out.

Wait for 3 weeks from the date of surgery before starting to use sunscreen. Do not use heat of any kind (heat lamp, heating pad, sauna, hot tub, tanning booth) for at least 12 weeks after surgery or permanently if you have areas of decreased sensation around the scars.

Smoking

Do not smoke for at least 8 weeks before and after surgery. Stay away from second hand smoke . Smoking can slow healing and cause skin breakdown. It can also cause death of tissues.

Other instructions

- For 10 days after the operation, do not use Aspirin, ibuprofen or similar medications. You may use regular or extra strength Tylenol.
- Start using the scar creams or ointments on the incision we provide at your post op appointment after consulting your surgeon.

When to call

- Call the office if you are unable to tolerate food or liquids for more than 24 hours
- Call the office if you are vomiting for more than 24 hours or become dehydrated even if less than 24 hours.
- Call the office immediately for a fever of 101 degrees F or higher.
- Call the office if there is increasing pain, redness, swelling, and warmth or pus drainage at the incision/wound.