

# **Incisional/ Ventral/ Umbilical Hernia Repair**

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## **Are there any diet restrictions?**

- Return to your same diet as before admission
- Taking smaller portions, more frequently during the day may help in transitioning to your regular diet (6-8 small meals per day)
- Avoid constipation; drink plenty of water and caffeine-free fluids. Take stool softener while you are taking prescribed pain medication

## **When can I go back to normal activities?**

- No lifting anything greater than 5 - 10 pounds for 6 weeks. This includes strenuous activities such as vacuuming, lifting children, groceries, laundry, moving furniture, mowing lawns, sports activities
- No driving until your first post-op visit. You may ride as a passenger.
- You may climb stairs in moderation
- Walk as much as tolerated. This is the only activity/ exercise allowed for 6 weeks
- Resume sexual activity after your doctor at first post-op visit.

## **How will I care for my incision?**

- If your surgery was out-patient, you may remove your dressing after 24 hrs and shower
- After discharge you may shower your incision once home. Gently wash your incision and pat dry. Leave open to the air and dry; no use of powders or creams. No tub baths, hot tubs, or swimming until the incision is completely healed

- Avoid tight clothing around your incision site or fabrics which may irritate the skin. Wear loose comfortable clothing.
- If staples are present, these will be removed at your follow-up visit. You may still shower.
- If steri-strips are present, these will fall off in about 1-2 weeks. **Do not** pull them off earlier.

### **How I manage my pain at home?**

- For best pain control take your pain medication at regular intervals, about every 4-6 hrs. This will prevent pain build-up that may occur. Use only as much prescription pain medications as you need.
- Taking over the counter ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®) alternated with prescription pain medication may improve pain control
- Do not drink alcohol or drive while taking narcotic pain medication

### **When should I call my doctor?**

Call if you have any of the signs and symptoms that may indicate an infection:

- Temperature above 101°F
- Significant increase in wound pain or discomfort
- Excessive redness, swelling, or drainage from the incision sites. It is normal to have scrotal swelling and bruising
- The incisions begin to open

Call if you have any changes in your overall health such as having:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Chills
- profuse (excessive) sweating
- diarrhea
- constipation
- inability to urinate or completely empty bladder

## What is the number to call?

- On weekdays contact the General Surgery Call Center at 734- (734)-936-5738 (Monday - Friday, 8am –5 PM)
- On weekends, holidays, or after business hours call 734-936-6267 (hospital paging) and ask for the surgery resident on-call.

## What is my follow-up care?

- You will return to the clinic for your follow-up visit about two weeks after discharge. If you have not already received an appointment, we will arrange it and notify you via the patient portal or by mail.

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