

## **Surgical Instructions for Minor Procedures**

We recognize that nearly all patients are worried and nervous before their surgery. Knowing what to expect and having your questions answered before the surgery can often alleviate much of the anxiety. The following material is presented to answer some of the most common questions that you may have before your surgery.

### **PREOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

- Avoid taking aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen, Goody's powder, or any other over-the-counter pain medication (except acetaminophen) for five days prior to surgery.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the evening prior to your surgery. This includes coffee, water, candy, gum, etc. This is done to ensure that your stomach will be completely empty prior to beginning your anesthesia in an effort to prevent anesthetic complications.
- You should report to UAB North Pavilion at the time that you were given at your preoperative screening appointment. This time will usually be approximately 2 hours prior to your scheduled procedure.
- A family member may be with you in the Preoperative area. Your physician will speak with you here and answer any last minute questions.
- You will be asked to sign a "Consent for Surgery" form at this time. If you have any questions about this form, please ask your physician.
- If you take any medications, please ask your physician or the anesthesiologist who sees you at your preoperative visit whether or not you should take them on the day of surgery.
- A family member must be available to drive you home and monitor your status on the day of surgery.

### **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

- Following your procedure, you will spend approximately 30-45 minutes in the Recovery Room before being transported back to the One Day Surgery Unit. When you have completely recovered from anesthesia and can tolerate liquids, you will be discharged home from this unit.
- On the day of discharge from the hospital, you should limit your activity. Please consult with your physician regarding when you can return to work and normal activities.
- Diet is important in helping you regain your strength and rebuild tissues. Initial meals should be simple such as soup, sandwich, Jell-O, etc. However, you should return to a normal diet as soon as possible after surgery. If your diet does not include three balanced meals per day, it may be beneficial for you to take a vitamin and mineral supplement. There are many over-the-counter vitamins available.
- Following your surgery, you may experience vaginal bleeding or spotting. This may last for several days. If it should become heavier than your normal menstrual period, we ask that you contact us. Your period should begin at its expected time.
- You may shower as desired. If you have an abdominal incision covered by a dressing, it may be removed the day following surgery but should be kept as clean and dry as possible. If you notice drainage from the incision or a foul odor related to the incision, we ask that you check your temperature and notify us. Discuss whether bathing is appropriate with your doctor.
- If your incision was closed with staples, they will have to be removed in the doctor's office. If your incision is vertical, you will be given a time to return in 7-10 days for removal. If your incision is horizontal, they will be removed in 3-5 days.

- If your incision was closed with stitches, they will dissolve and do not require removal.
- If your incision was closed with a skin adhesive, no further action is required.
- If steri strips (butterfly sutures) were applied to your incision, leave them in place for 5-7 days after which time they can be removed.
- You may experience abdominal pain or cramping, which will gradually lessen over the next 2-3 days. It should be relieved by the medication given to you on your discharge from the hospital. You may apply a heating pad or ice bag as desired for comfort. Please call the office if you have increasing pain in the postoperative period.
- You may experience mild constipation following your surgery. Surgery, in combination with narcotic pain meds can result in delayed bowel activity. Your daily intake should include at least 6-8 glasses of water. We also recommend adequate fiber intake with green leafy vegetables, salads, and fiber supplements. You may also use a stool softener such as Colace daily. If you have not any bowel action by five days postoperatively, please contact the office.
- We ask that you call the office when you get home from the hospital to schedule a checkup with your physician if this was not done when you left the hospital. This appointment should be within 2-6 weeks of your surgery depending on the type of surgery. At this time, your physician will discuss the findings of the surgery with you in more detail and work with you in making plans for further therapy.
- If you have any questions prior to this appointment, feel free to contact one of the nurses in the office. They will be more than happy to address your questions and concerns.