

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR BOWEL SURGERY

ACTIVITY:

- Walking around the house, office work, climbing stairs or riding in a car is fine as soon as you feel able.
- You will not harm the incision by walking.
- You may feel tired for three to six weeks after your operation. Take a nap when you feel tired.
- Do **NOT** drive a car while you are taking pain medicine.
- Sexual activity is fine as soon as you are comfortable.

DIET:

- Eat soft foods that is easy to digest.
- Do **NOT EAT** roughage that gives you gas, for example broccoli, for the first few days after surgery.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Your appetite when you return home may be less than normal. Do not force yourself to eat. Eat when you are hungry. Concentrate on liquids. It is important to stay well hydrated.
- The pain medicines may cause constipation.

INCISION CARE:

- It is normal to have some bruising and swelling around the incision.
- Gently clean the skin around the incision daily with mild soap and water.
- Change the dressing (gauze) daily to help keep the incision dry and clean.
- Drainage will slowly decrease as the incision closes. When it has sealed over and is dry, you do not need a dressing.
- Take a shower whenever you like, even if there is a drain in place. Afterwards, pat the incision dry.

- Do **NOT** sit in a tub for a bath until the incision is closed and drains have been taken out.
- Do **NOT** use a sauna or hot tub for 2-3 weeks after surgery.

COMMON PROBLEMS:

- You will have a bowel movement at home in the next few days.
- Do not take laxatives to hurry bowel motion.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF:

- You have chills or fever greater than 101°F (or 38.3°C).
- You have new redness, swelling, increasing pain, pus or a foul odor at the incision site.
- You have heavy bleeding from the incision (soaking the dressing).

FOLLOW-UP:

- If you do not have an appointment for a follow-up visit, call our office and make one.
- For any questions that are not emergencies, call our office or the floor the hospital where you were a patient.
- In case of emergency, call our office and/or go to the Emergency Room at Houston Northwest Hospital.