

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTIAL AND TOTAL GASTRECTOMY (REMOVAL OF STOMACH)

ACTIVITY:

- You may feel tired for the couple of weeks after your operation.
- Take a nap when you feel tired.
- Walking around the house, office work, climbing stairs or driving in a car is fine as soon as you feel able. Increase your activity gradually.
- Do **NOT** do any heavy physical activity such as heavy lifting (nothing heavier than 10 pounds), sports, pushing or pulling for 6 weeks.
- Sexual activity is fine as soon as you are comfortable.
- Do **NOT** drive a car if you are taking pain medicine, until the soreness is gone.

DIET:

- Before you go home, the dietician or nurse will tell you the kind and amount of food you can eat.
- Some patients may not be ready or able to eat solid food and may need to have nourishment delivered through a tube.
- When you are ready to eat, you can expect that you will eat smaller and more frequent meals.
- Make sure you have enough calories. If necessary, have Ensure or Carnation Instant Breakfast.
- Most patients find that low-fat, bland foods are more easily digested.
- In general you need to eat more protein and less sugar. You may also need to limit the amounts of liquids you have with your meals.

DAILY INCISION CARE:

- Gently wash the skin around your incision daily with mild soap and water.
- Change dressing (gauze) daily if you have one on your incision.

- Keep the dressing dry and clean. When the incision has sealed over and is dry, you do not need a dressing.
- Loose fitting clothes may be more comfortable at first.
- You may take a shower whenever you like. Do **NOT** sit in a bath until the incision is closed.

COMMON PROBLEMS:

- Dumping Syndrome: Food and liquids now enter the small intestine more quickly. This causes uncomfortable symptoms such as nausea, fullness, cramps, sweating, weakness or diarrhea. Changing your diet can usually relieve these symptoms.
- Vitamin B12 deficiency may be expected after your stomach is removed. You will need to have monthly vitamin injections.
- Pain medicines can cause constipation (not being able to have a bowel movement).
- If you have constipation, take one tablespoon of Metamucil, mixed in water or fruit juice a day, for the first few weeks.

CALL YOUR DOCTOR IF:

- You have chills or your temperature is greater than 101°F (or 38.3°C).
- You have redness, swelling, increasing pain, pus or a foul smell from the incision site.
- You have persistent nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- You go three days without having a bowel movement.

FOLLOW-UP:

- If you do not have an appointment for a follow-up visit, call your doctor's office to schedule one after you go home.
- For any questions that are not emergencies, call the floor where you were a patient.
- In case of emergencies, call your doctor's office and/or go to the Emergency Room.