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## COLON RESECTION DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

**Diet:** During your hospital stay, you will have been on a liquid diet until you passed gas. Once you are having bowel movements, you can have soft foods (scrambled eggs, grits, etc). After a day or two of soft foods, you can gradually advance to a regular diet. Play it by ear. Start out with pastas with sauce, fish and "easy to chew" foods. You may want to avoid carbonated beverages at first as they might make you feel bloated.

**Pain relief.** Take it easy for a couple days, but, certainly don't confine yourself to bed. Get up frequently and walk around the house. Do not take aspirin or aspirin containing medications unless this has been cleared by your surgeon. You have been given a prescription for pain medication that should be effective in managing your pain. Do not take it on an empty stomach. As your pain lessens, you can try Tylenol 650 mg every 4 hours or Motrin 200mg one or two every 4 hours. Never consume alcohol while under the influence of narcotics. You may resume taking all your preoperative medications as directed by your surgeon.

**Wound Care:** You may be discharged with small strips of white tape over each incision. Allow the small strips to fall off on their own or your doctor will remove them on your follow-up visit. You are free to shower with these strips on. You may have staples for larger incisions. Again you may shower with the staples and leave them open to air. Your doctor will remove them in the office. Avoid baths or prolonged soaking.

**Bowel movements:** The pain medication you have been prescribed is constipating. On the other hand, you may find diarrhea occurs when your bowels first start functioning again. If you go for two days without a bowel movement, you may take stool softeners such as colace, high fiber supplements such as Fibercon or gentle laxatives such as Milk of Magnesia. Drink plenty of liquids. Call the office for prolonged diarrhea or constipation.

**Activity:** It will be very important to walk after surgery. Frequent short walks are the best way to regain your strength. In addition, walks decrease the risk of developing complications like pneumonia or "blood clots" in your legs. Your doctor will let you know when you can drive and resume your regular activities and exercise after you are seen for your first office visit.

**Follow up:** You will need to see your surgeon in the office in 7-10 days. If prior to discharge an appointment has not been made, you need to call the office when you get home and schedule one.