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LAPAROSCOPIC INGUINAL HERNIA DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

Pain Management: Most discomfort can be easily relieved with oral medication such as Vicodin, plain Tylenol, or Motrin. Your discomfort may be experienced as bloating or fullness in the abdomen, some gas pain, and pain referred to your shoulders. In addition, you may experience pressure or pulling in the location of the repaired hernia defect. There may also be some bruising (significant black and blue discoloration of the skin) of the testicle, scrotum and/or penis (in the male) or of the labia (in the female). Sometimes swelling of the scrotum may occur. You may use an ice bag on these bruised or swollen areas for the first 24 to 48 hours to provide comfort.

Diet: Patients are most comfortable starting out with clear liquids (ice chips, popsicles, tea, broth, Jell-O or ginger-ale). Within several hours of surgery, you will be feeling like taking more substantial food. If you are experiencing nausea, starting out "light" on your diet and advancing to your usual diet as soon as you feel able will help minimize this problem. Some prescription medication on an empty stomach can also cause nausea. If you have nausea which persists for long, call us.

Temperature Elevation: It is not unusual for you to have a mild temperature elevation (up to 100 degrees) for a few days after surgery. Do not hesitate to call if you have a fever greater than 101.

Wound Care: You will have Band-Aids or possibly a small piece of gauze over each small incision site. A small amount of bloody drainage on the dressings is not unusual. After 24 hours, you may remove the dressing and may get the incision sites wet (i.e., you may shower but no tubbing for one week). Beneath the dressings, you will probably also have Steri-Strips (they look like white reinforcement tape) that should be left on until they start coming off on their own or until your surgeon removes them in the office.

Bowel/Bladder: If you experience any difficulty passing urine once you get home or if you have not urinated after 8 hours please call us. Prescription pain medication tends to contribute to constipation. In general, increased fluid intake and eating foods high in roughage (such as bran, salads, vegetables and fruits) will be adequate to prevent constipation. If you feel it would be helpful, you may use a gentle laxative such as Milk of Magnesia. Call us if you feel constipation is an unresolved problem.

Activity: You may resume non-strenuous activity as soon as you want. You should be able to return to most occupations in about a week to 10 days. The doctor will advise you about resumption of activities at your post-operative visit. Sexual activity can be resumed as soon as you aren't limited by discomfort. Strenuous activity (such as aerobics, jogging, heavy housework and gardening) can usually be resumed in about two weeks to one month, depending on the size of the hernia.

Follow Up: You will need to see your surgeon in the office in 7-10 days. If prior to discharge, you do not have an appointment scheduled, please call the office as soon as possible to arrange one.