Wound Care After Surgery

Please read the instructions outlined below. Refer to this sheet in the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for your wound after you leave the hospital. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. Your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available. But unavoidable complications sometimes occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, call your caregiver.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Take all medicine as directed.
- Do not remove your dressing or get your incision wet without direction from your surgeon.
- If the bandage becomes wet, dirty or develops a foul smell, notify your surgeon or caregiver or follow dressing change instructions that you were given.
- It will be normal to be sore for a couple weeks following surgery. See your surgeon if this seems to be getting worse rather than better.
- Take prescribed medicine as directed. Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Use showers for bathing, until seen by your caregiver or as instructed.
- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed.
- Avoid lifting any weight until you are instructed otherwise.
- Make an appointment to see your caregiver for stitches (*suture*) or staple removal when instructed.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound that is not controlled with medication.
- There is drainage, blood or pus coming from the wound that lasts longer than one day. Seek care sooner if you are concerned.
- An unexplained oral temperature (fever) above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- You develop signs of generalized infection. These include muscle aches, chills, fever, or a general ill feeling.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- The edges of the wound separate after the sutures, staples or skin adhesive strips have been removed.
- You develop dizzy episodes or fainting while standing.
- You develop persistent nausea or vomiting.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You have difficulty breathing.
- You develop any reaction or side effects to medicine given.

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