General Postsurgical Instructions, Adult

You may expect to feel dizzy, weak, and drowsy for as long as 24 hours after receiving the medicine that made you sleep (*anesthetic*). The following information pertains to your recovery period for the first 24 hours following surgery.

- **Do not** drive a car, ride a bicycle, participate in physical activities, or take public transportation until you are done taking narcotic pain medicines or as directed by your caregiver.
- **Do not** drink alcohol or take tranquilizers.
- **Do not** take medicine that has not been prescribed by your caregiver.
- **Do not** sign important papers or make important decisions while on narcotic pain medicines.
- Have a responsible person with you.

CARE OF INCISION

- Change bandages (*dressings*) as directed.
- Take showers instead of baths until your caregiver gives you permission to take baths. Check with your caregiver if you have tubes coming from the wound site.
- Avoid heavy lifting (more than 10 pounds/4.5 kilograms), pushing, or pulling.
- Avoid activities that may risk injury to your surgical site.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver. **Do not** take aspirin. It can make you bleed. Take medicines (*antibiotics*) that kill germs as directed.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You feel sick to your stomach (*nauseous*).
- You start to throw up (*vomit*).
- You have trouble eating or drinking.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- You have constipation that is not helped by adjusting diet or increasing fluid intake. Pain medicines are a common cause of constipation.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have persistent dizziness.
- You have difficulty breathing or a congested sounding (*croupy*) cough.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- There is increasing pain or tenderness near or in the surgical site.

Document Released: 04/07/2004 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011
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