Peri-Rectal Abscess
(Abscess Around the Rectum)

Your caregiver has diagnosed you as having a peri-rectal abscess. This is an infected area near the rectum that is filled with pus. If the abscess is near the surface of the skin, your physician may open *(incise*) the area and drain the pus.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If your abscess was opened up and drained. A small piece of gauze may be placed in the opening so that it can drain. Do not remove the gauze unless directed by your caregiver.
- A loose dressing may be placed over the abscess site. Change the dressing as often as necessary to keep it clean and dry.
- After the drain is removed, the area may be washed with a gentle antiseptic (soap) four times per day.
- A warm sitz bath, warm packs or heating pad may be used for pain relief, taking care not to burn yourself.
- Return for a wound check in 1 day or as directed.
- An “inflatable doughnut” may be used for sitting with added comfort. These can be purchased at a drugstore or medical supply house.
- To reduce pain and straining with bowel movements, eat a high fiber diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables. Use stool softeners as recommended by your caregiver. This is especially important if narcotic type of pain medications were prescribed as these causes marked constipation.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have increasing pain that is not controlled by medication.
- There is increased *inflammation* (redness), swelling, bleeding, or drainage from the area.
- An oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C) develops, or as your caregiver suggests.
- You develop chills or generalized *malaise* (feel lethargic or feel “washed out”).
- You develop any new *symptoms* (problems) you feel may be related to your present problem.

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