



## Bariatric Surgery Post-Operative Patient Instructions

### After Surgery

You will be taken to the Recovery Room following surgery where they will monitor your respiratory status and other vital signs to be sure you are stable before sending you to the nursing unit. If there should be any concerns regarding your vital signs or respiratory status, you may be sent to the Surgical Intensive Care Unit to be monitored post operatively. This does take place on occasion and you should be aware of the possibility.

You may experience pressure in your abdomen during your stay in the recovery room. This is a normal occurrence; however, you should notify your nurse of any discomfort that you may be experiencing. When the Anesthesiologist feels you are stable and doing well, you will be evaluated for discharge.

### Activity

- Walk, Walk, Walk
- Walking helps to reduce post surgical complications such as pneumonia and blood clots
- Try to get up and walk around as much as possible, but not to the point that you hurt.
- It is common to feel tired for the first few weeks following any operation.
- Do not do any vigorous physical activity for 1-2 weeks until you feel well.
- Do not lift anything over 10 pounds for 4-6 weeks.
- Do not do any core exercises
- Do not drive a car if you are taking pain medicine.
- Resuming previous sexual activity is usually fine when you are no longer requiring pain medication.

### Bathing & Incision Care

- You may shower 48 hours after your surgery but avoid water directly to the incisions.
- Pat your incisions dry, do not scrub them.
- No tubs baths, swimming, or hot tub use for 4 weeks following surgery.
- If your wound was closed with surgical glue. Take a sponge bath and avoid wetting the area of the wound for the first 4 days. Do not remove or pick at the glue, it will come off on its own after 4-7 days.
- Take all dressings off after 48 hours, or sooner if there is a lot of fluid collecting on or under it.
- Keep all your incisions dry and clean, by using gauze and bandages as needed.

### Medication

- NO driving while taking narcotic pain medication
- **NO** Aspirin or Aspirin products
- **NO** Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs-typically arthritis medications
- Gas-X as needed up to 7 times per day.
- You may just take Tylenol for the pain- **DO NOT** take Tylenol and the prescribed narcotic pain medication together.

Remember to stop taking your medication for diabetes the day of surgery. However continue to check your sugar at home. If you're sugar increases above 150 call your primary physician so he can manage your sugar. Remember to continue to take all of your other medications and let your primary care physician or cardiologist decrease them as needed.

## **THE ONLY BAD QUESTION IS THE ONE YOU DON'T ASK!!**

### **Pain Control**

- Shoulder pain is a frequent complaint after laparoscopic surgery. It usually improves after 3-4 days.
- If you were given a prescription for narcotic pain medication prior to discharge.
- Only take the medication when you are having pain and always try to take the smallest dose possible to control your pain.
- As your pain subsides, you will find that non-prescription medications control the pain by themselves. You may also switch to regular Tylenol® if you are not allergic.

### **Back to Work**

- You may usually return to work in 1-2 weeks depending on your occupation and how you feel.
- Ask for light duty work if possible.

### **Common Problems**

- Having a sore throat is usually common after the breathing tube that was placed for your surgery. This usually resolves in 1-2 days, but throat lozenges and cough drops may help.

### **When to call the office (941) 254-4957**

- Your temperature is greater than 101.5oF (or 38.3oC).
- You have continued nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- If you are unable to tolerate any diet.
- Any change in your incisions: new redness or swelling around the wound, increasing pain, a lot of bleeding, pus or a foul odor from the wound.
- Abdominal pain not relieved by pain medication
- Shortness of breath or increase in breathing.
- Rapid or increase in heart rate
- BLEEDING: From the incision(s), in vomit or stool.
- CALF OR LEG PAIN and/or swelling.



### **Signs of Infection**

- Temperature of 101°F or above
- Redness and swelling at incision site(s)
- Pus-like or foul smelling drainage
- Separating or opening of healed incision

### **Follow Up**

- If you do not have a follow-up appointment, call the office at (941) 254-4957 to schedule one for 7-10 days after you are discharged from the hospital. Unless your physician specifies another date.
- Call the office during regular business hours for any questions that you may have.

### **In case of Emergencies**

- Call 911
- If the situation requires, go to the emergency room either at the hospital where you were operated on or the nearest emergency room.
- Call the office at (941) 254-4957 Monday through Friday 8-4pm. An answering service is available 24 hours a day and can direct your call to covering physician.