

Colectomy Post-Op Instructions

Diet

- You should be on or transitioning to a regular diet upon discharge from the hospital.
- It would be wise to avoid high residue foods for a couple of weeks after surgery. These would include large vegetables including salads, corn, seeds, and nuts.

Medication

- If not allergic, please take 600mg ibuprofen and 1000mg acetaminophen together as tolerated with food every 6 hours. as needed for pain.
- Narcotic pain medication (oxycodone) can cause addiction and should only be used as needed if there is moderate to severe pain after the acetaminophen and ibuprofen are taken. You should minimize their use.
- Take pain medications as prescribed by your doctor. Take your pain medication with a small amount of food.
- Pain medications may constipate you. If you are feeling constipated, please take MiraLAX that you can get at any drugstore as directed on the bottle.

Activity

- No strenuous activity for 4 weeks.
- Do not lift more than 20lbs or anything that makes you strain for 4 weeks.

Dressing

- Your incisions are closed with dissolvable sutures (stitches). Skin glue will cover your incisions. The skin glue will naturally slough off your skin. Do not rub, scratch, or pick at skin glue.
- No oils/lotions/creams over your incisions until the glue starts to flake off. At that point 1% hydrocortisone cream may be applied to relieve itching.
- You may shower or bathe 24 hours after your surgery. Clean with soap and water then pat dry gently.
- You may develop some redness immediately adjacent to your incisions as they heal which is normal.

What to Expect

- It is common to experience shoulder discomfort, chest tightness, bilateral shoulder discomfort for 24 to 48 hours after surgery, gradually this will go away. It is caused by carbon dioxide used to inflate your abdomen during the procedure. Carbon dioxide is a gas, and like all gases, travels upwards, settling on your chest and shoulders.

- Soreness in the abdominal area like an ache you would feel after starting a new exercise program involving your abdominal muscles. This ache will gradually go away within a few days. Your abdomen may be distended for a few days after surgery.
- There may be a large black or blue area (bruise), on your abdomen to your hip. This may appear within the first week after surgery. It is caused by blood pooling under the skin from your surgery. Your body will reabsorb this blood over time. The bruise will turn yellow and disappear in time.
- You may feel sleepy, rest for the first 24 hours.
- You may have some nausea or vomiting the day of surgery, but this should not persist beyond the day AFTER surgery.
- You may have a sore throat from the tube that is used to help you breathe during general anesthesia.
- It may take a few days before you have a bowel movement. Bowel irregularity is expected with pain medication. Please take MiraLAX for constipation.
- You can expect to intermittently have bloody stools for months following a colon surgery.
- You may have some loose stools initially after surgery, but this should resolve within a couple of weeks.
- Your bowel habits always be different than they were prior to surgery.

Miscellaneous

- No alcohol or driving for 24 hours after surgery or while taking narcotic pain medicine.
- Do not make any personal or business decisions for 24 hours.
- You should have a responsible adult with you for the rest of the day and night.

Possible Problems

Call Dr Bollins at 218-461-2212 if:

- Inability to drink fluids.
- Unable to urinate eight hours after your surgery.
- Your temperature is greater than 101 degrees F.
- You notice excessive bleeding or unexpected drainage from the wound site.
- You notice extreme redness or warmth around your incision sites.
- You notice wound edges open or separating.
- Your pain is not relieved by pain medication.
- Severe loose stools that last more than a few days.

Follow-Up

- We will see you in our office 7-10 days after your surgery.
- If not already scheduled, please call 218-461-6240 to schedule a post-op visit.
- If you're a patient from **Ely** and your post-op visit has not already been scheduled, please call 218-365-8793.