

POST-OPERATIVE CARE

YOUR RECOMMENDED POST-OPERATIVE CARE

The care of your surgical site is important to the success of your recovery. There are several things that could happen following surgery.

- **BLEEDING:** To reduce the possibility of bleeding:
 - Limit activities for at least 24 hours.
 - If surgery was on an arm or leg, keep it elevated.
 - If surgery was on the face, head, or neck:
 - Avoid stooping or bending.
 - Avoid straining to have a bowel movement.
 - Sleep with your head and shoulders elevated on extra pillows.

Should bleeding occur, apply firm, constant pressure to the wound using a towel for 15 minutes. After doing this, if the wound continues to bleed, apply pressure for another 15 minutes. If, after this, the bleeding has not stopped, contact your doctor.

- **PAIN:** Pain, post-operatively, is generally slight. Nearly always, Tylenol Extra Strength will relieve it.
- **INFECTION:** Signs of infection are increased pain, swelling, redness, or yellowish drainage. Notify the doctor if these appear.
- **FOR ONE MONTH AVOID ANY ACTIVITIES WHICH MAY STRETCH YOUR WOUND.** There will be a scar and redness after surgery. This will decrease as healing progresses, but redness may last as long as six months. Everyone heals differently and sometimes the final scar can hardly be seen, while others become thick and tender.
- **DO NOT SMOKE.** Smoking cigarettes delays wound healing. You should not smoke during the month following your surgery.



CARE OF YOUR POST-OP SITE

A dressing has been applied to your wound. Leave this dressing on for the next 48 hours unless otherwise directed. After removing the dressing, you may get the wound wet in the shower or bath. To cleanse the wound:

Twice a day:

1. Wash your hands with soap and water.
2. Make a solution of one tablespoon of white vinegar and one cup of water.
3. Soak a clean washcloth or gauze in the mixture and cleanse your wound with it.
4. Apply a small amount of Vaseline until the sutures are removed.

Steri-strips, or “butterfly tape,” should be applied across your wound to help keep the edges of the wound together. Studies have shown that applying Steri-strips to a wound for one month can result in a better cosmetic outcome. Steri-strips will fall off themselves and then should be reapplied once this happens.

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