

OPEN ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

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Medications:

- Take pain medication as directed.
- Do not drink beer, wine, or hard liquor or take recreational drugs while on pain medication.
- Take a gentle laxative such as Senekot S daily as directed if constipation becomes a problem. Pain medication may cause constipation.
- _____
- _____

Activity:

- No lifting over 10 pounds (*bag of groceries*) for 2 months.
- Avoid sitting or standing for more than 30 minutes if legs are swollen.
- No twisting, bending or strenuous activity for 2 months. Examples are vacuuming, swinging a golf club, or shoveling snow.
- No driving for 2 weeks. You may ride in a car.
- Walk often, short distances at first & increase slowly. You may go up and down stairs.
- Expect a recovery period of 2-3 months.

Diet:

- Resume the diet you were on before surgery.
- Eat fruits, vegetables, and bran products to avoid constipation.
- Eat 5-6 small meals or snacks a day. Many patients have a decrease in appetite for 4-6 weeks following surgery.
- Drink Ensure or Sustacal supplement if you're not getting enough calories. These may be found at your local pharmacy or grocery store.

Incision:

- Keep incision dry. Apply dry gauze if there is drainage, and call the doctor. Your incision will take several months to heal.
- You may shower. Pat the incision dry with a towel.
- No bath, whirlpool or swimming for 3 weeks and until staples or sutures are removed.

Call your surgeon if any of the following conditions develop after discharge:

- Redness or drainage from the incision
- Fever above 101° F (38.3C)
- Increased abdominal pain, bloating, nausea, vomiting, or persistent diarrhea.
- Unable to drink liquids
- If a leg becomes cold or painful

If unable to reach your doctor, go to the nearest emergency room.

Follow-up Appointment:

Date: _____ Physician's Name: _____

Time: _____ Phone: _____

- Call your surgeon's office within 24 hours for an appointment if not scheduled prior to discharge.