



INCISIONAL / VENTRAL or UMBILICAL/EPIGASTRIC HERNIA REPAIR **POST-OPERATIVE INFORMATION**

DIET

Food and fluids as tolerated. If you feel sick, sip water only. You may experience some constipation postoperatively (due to temporary muscle inaction). We suggest that you take a regular amount of aperients (e.g. Metamucil or lactulose) a few days before and after your surgery.

ACTIVITIES

The effects of your anaesthetic may be felt for up to 24 hours. During this time you should not:

- drive a car
- make major decisions
- drink alcohol
- sign important documents
- operate machines

Rest for the first 24 hours to minimise the chance of bleeding. Slowly increase your physical activity over one to two weeks, according to your comfort. Walk around as freely as possible for the first few days, increasing to normal according to comfort levels. Avoid strenuous or heavy exertion for four weeks. Return to work when you feel able to. Most physical activities such as jogging, tennis, bicycling and manual labour can be resumed in about **four – six weeks**.

PAIN

You will be given pain relief medication. Please take this regularly. If you have what you consider to be excessive pain despite taking pain relief, or there is swelling at the operation site, contact the Hernia Clinic on 961-6666 or your surgeon. Be aware that some pain medication can cause constipation and temporary changes in your bowel habit.

WOUND CARE

The dressing may remain on for 5-7 days, but can be removed before this if it leaks or lifts off. You can shower with this dressing on as it is waterproof. After it is removed, keep the area clean and dry except for showers. Your sutures will normally dissolve between 10 days and 3 weeks, and do not require removing. If you have been given an elastic binder, wear this during the day and night, removing it for showering or dressing changes.

PHONE FOR ADVICE IF THE FOLLOWING OCCURS

Bleeding - apply firm pressure for 15 – 20 minutes
Swelling of your wound - A small amount of swelling is normal
Red, inflamed discharging wound – may indicate infection
Fever (more than 38 deg C)

FOLLOWUP

Telephone your surgeon's receptionist to schedule a follow-up appointment if not already made.

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