

We are always happy to answer any questions you might have. Some of our most frequently asked medical questions are answered below:

Is there anything special I need to do before my surgery?

Your surgeon and staff will instruct each patient individually regarding their preparation for surgery. The most important thing you can do is relax and try to get a good night's sleep before your surgery. If you have been told to fast from food and water after a certain time, it is vitally important to follow those instructions precisely. Eating or drinking before a surgery performed under general anesthesia can make you feel nauseated when you wake up, and may actually be dangerous in certain circumstances.

What do I do after my surgery?

On the day of your office visit you will be scheduled a post-operative visit within the next seven to ten days. This is very important so that the doctor can make sure your incision is healing properly, and you are recovering as expected.

May I take a bath after surgery?

Bathing recommendations depend on the type of dressing and sutures that were used to close your surgical incision.

- *Surgical Dressing* If you leave the hospital with a surgical dressing over your wound, we ask that you please remove it the day following your surgery. You may shower once the dressing is removed.
- *Steri-Strips* Your incision will be covered with a "steri-strip" that looks like see through plastic tape following your surgery. You may wash the entire area daily with a mild soap. Do not use deodorant soaps or any other harsh soap.
- *Staples or Sutures* If you have staples or sutures, wash the incision site as well as any drainage wounds daily, with a mild soap.

What should I do if my incision seems red or inflamed?

A certain amount of redness and swelling around the incision is perfectly normal after surgery, particularly during the first four to six days following the operation. During this period, it is normal for the surgical wound to be red, swollen and tender. As the wound starts to heal, the redness and swelling should gradually diminish over the two to three weeks following surgery. If your surgical wound is still giving you noticeable discomfort after a week, seems to be infected or does not appear to be healing properly, call the office to schedule an appointment with your surgeon. But remember, the area around the incision may be numb or feel "strange" for many weeks after your surgery. This will slowly diminish as the incision heals.

What if I develop a fever or start to feel bad?

Any time you develop a fever postoperatively, a large amount of bleeding from your sutures, or start feeling generally worse instead of better, you should call the office immediately.

When can I resume my normal activities?

With today's modern, less-invasive surgical techniques, it is often possible for patients to return to normal activities very quickly. But each case is individual. Unless your surgeon places specific restrictions upon you at your discharge, you may resume normal home activities as usual, paying good attention to your energy level and making sure not to push yourself too hard. If you feel very tired or begin to have pain, this is nature's way of telling you to rest. You may wish to enlist the help of your family members or some friends to see you through this initial post-operative stage.

Why does your surgeon recommend walking for most patients?

Walking is a very beneficial, low stress exercise that can help post surgical patients with many problems. Regular walking boosts poor appetites, helps patients sleep more soundly, reduces the need for pain medication, and improves intestinal regularity. Walking to your mailbox, up the stairs, or around your house or backyard DOES NOT COUNT. When your surgeon tells you to walk, this is what it means: every morning, starting the day after you go home, walk 1/2 mile. Every evening, walk another 1/2 mile. Within four weeks following your surgery, you should be able to increase this to 1 mile each morning and 1 miles each evening.

I feel a hard ridge of tissue in my surgical scar. Is this normal?

A hard, ridge-like area under the skin around your surgical incision is normal and will fade with time. **I have bruising and discoloration near my incision. Is this okay?** Purple or yellow discoloration on or near the site of the surgical incision is perfectly normal and not a cause for alarm. This bruising will fade with time.

I have soreness or swelling at the site of my incision. What can I do?

Soreness and swelling are both improved by the same prescription. They will both get better daily if you follow your surgeon's recommendations for post-surgical walking.