

NEWTON-WELLESLEY SURGEONS, INC.

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POSTOPERATIVE UMBILICAL HERNIA REPAIR INFORMATION

Surgery You have just undergone surgery to repair an umbilical hernia. This involves making an incision at the site of the hernia to return the contents of the hernia sac to the abdominal cavity. The opening is usually repaired with a plastic mesh in order to decrease the chance of recurrence.

Pain If your prescription was not faxed to your pharmacy upon discharge from the hospital, you will be given a prescription for pain medication. Because pain medication can be constipating, be sure to drink lots of fluids and eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. It will also be helpful to take a stool softener such as Colace, Metamucil or Citrucel once or twice a day, if you are constipated. If you are unable to have a bowel movement following surgery, a mild laxative such as Milk of Magnesia may be used. Being up and about after surgery is also helpful in regulating bowel function. To minimize discomfort when you are moving about, support your incision with a small pillow or rolled up towel.

Incision Your incision is closed using a number of sutures below the skin surface. When you remove the outer dressing (see bathing instructions below for when to remove the dressing), you will find a special ribbed tape covering the incision. The ribbed tape will fall off on its own. You may find that your incision is swollen following surgery and could have some discoloration which can extend around your belly button. This does not mean your hernia was not repaired. This swelling and discoloration is normal and will resolve over the next several weeks to months.

Bathing You are asked to keep the outer dressing over the incision dry and in place for 1 day following surgery. On the day after surgery, remove the outer dressing or Band-Aid. It is now safe for you to get into the shower. Be careful not to scrub at the incision line, simply let the water run over the incision and gently pat the area dry.

Activity Following surgery, you are encouraged to do as much walking as is comfortable. You may climb stairs, taking them one at a time and slowly. You are not to operate a vehicle while you are having discomfort or taking pain medication. This will interfere with your ability to drive safely. Your surgeon will tell you when it is safe to resume driving. You are asked not to do any lifting over 25 pounds for the first two weeks following surgery. The doctor will tell you when it is safe to do more. If lifting causes pain in your incision, please stop. If pain persists, call the office and speak with the nurse.

Precautions Although not commonly seen, any incision is susceptible to infection. If you develop a fever of 101 degrees or above, have unexpected pain, redness or drainage from the incision, please contact my office.

Follow-up Please call the office a day or two after you go home to schedule your postoperative appointment for approximately two weeks after surgery

If you have any questions about your recovery, please do not hesitate to call our office