

NEWTON-WELLESLEY SURGEONS, INC.

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Postoperative drainage of abscess information

Surgery You have just had an abscess drained. This procedure involves the opening of the abscess cavity through a surgical incision. The wound is then packed open in order to allow the wound to heal from the inside. This may take several weeks.

Pain 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 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.

Wound Because the site of surgery is infected, the incision is left open and allowed to heal from the inside. The dressing needs to be changed twice per day initially. A visiting nurse may be sent to your home if the wound is large or you are unable to change the dressing yourself. The wound will be followed closely by your surgeon. Depending on the size of the wound, it may take anywhere from 2-4 weeks to heal fully.

Bathing It is safe to shower one day after surgery. Simply let water run into the incision and pat the area dry. It is important to let the water get inside the wound as this will promote healing. Please shower prior to each dressing change if possible.

Activity You may resume your normal activities, including work within several days following surgery. Certain activities, such as lifting or reaching may cause some local discomfort to the incision area. This too will resolve given time.

Precautions If you have a fever, unexpected pain, redness or increased discharge from the incision, please contact the office and speak with the nurse.

Follow-up If you do not have an appointment, call the office after your discharge from the hospital to set up your postoperative exam about 1 week after surgery.

If you have any questions concerning your recovery, please do not hesitate to call my office.