

NEWTON-WELLESLEY SURGEONS, INC.

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POSTOPERATIVE RIGHT COLECTOMY INSTRUCTIONS

Surgery You have just undergone surgery to remove the right side of your colon. This involves making an incision in the middle of your abdomen and removing the right side of your colon. The small intestine is reconnected to the remaining colon using a small stapler, or sutures. The abdominal wall is then sutured closed and your incision is closed with staples or with an absorbable suture under the skin. The average hospital stay is usually 5 days and will be determined by how quickly your intestines resume their normal function.

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 or Metamucil, once or twice a day. However, because the right side of your colon was removed, you may experience loose stools for several days or even months. This is normal and will resolve after the remaining colon does the job of absorbing water. Being up and about after surgery is also helpful in regulating bowel function. To minimize pain when you are moving about, support your incision with a small pillow or rolled up towel. Sleeping with a pillow under or between your knees will relieve stress on the incision area.

Diet There are no restrictions on your diet after this procedure. You may find that some foods are better tolerated by your body, and others that are not. Use your own judgment and stay away from foods that may irritate your system. If you find that you are constipated after you are discharged you may start to take Colace, Metamucil or Citrucel.

Incision Your incision may be closed with staples or stitches which are below the skin. If you have staples, they will need to be removed in my office approximately 10 days after surgery. If you do not have staples there are no stitches which need to come out.

Bathing After your discharge it is ok to take a 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 driving 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 6 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. In addition, if you experience crampy abdominal pain or worsening abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting call the office immediately.

Follow-up Please call the office to schedule your postoperative appointment for approximately 2 weeks after surgery. Call the office a day or two after you go home to schedule your appointment.

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