Home Care After Hemorrhoidectomy Surgery

Pain Relief

You may have some rectal pain immediately after your surgery. The pain should gradually lessen over the next 10 - 14 days as your incision heals and the swelling goes down. You will be given a prescription for pain medicine to take as directed. If you pain is mild, you may use TYLENOL or IBUPROFEN as directed on the bottle if allowed by your doctor. You may find it more comfortable sitting on a fluffy pillow. Do not sit on a plastic ring. These rings add more stress to your rectum.

Packing

A packing has been placed in your rectum during your surgery. It is usually absorbed, but you may notice this packing with your first bowel movement. It is safe to flush down your toilet.

Bleeding / Drainage

You may have some bright red bleeding immediately after your surgery and for the next 10 - 14 days as your incision heals. Bleeding may also occur with your bowel movements and be noted in the toilet bowl and on the towel tissue. Drainage from your rectum may occur for a few days as your incision heals. You may need to wear a pad to protect your underwear for a few days.

Swelling

You may have swelling at the incision site for 10 -14 days after your surgery. Taking a warm bath as described on the next page under “Care of your Incision” may help.

Bowel Movements

You may have some pain with your first bowel movements after surgery.

- **Do not try to put off having a bowel movement.** This may lead to a stool that is hard and more difficult to pass. Gently bearing down during a bowel movement will not injure the incision.

- **Eat foods high in fiber** (bran, oats, other grains, fresh fruit and vegetables) and **drink lots of water** (8 glasses a day).

- **Take the stool softener** as ordered by your doctor.

- If you are unable to have a bowel movement by the third day after surgery, you may use milk of magnesia. Follow the directions on the package and allow time for the medicine to be effective. Laxatives can cause diarrhea which can be irritating to your incision. Milk of Magnesia may be repeated in 6 to 8 hours if you still have not had a bowel movement. If this does not work you will need to call your doctor’s office for further information.
- It may take several days for your bowel movements to return to their normal pattern. You may not have a bowel movement every day. It is important to keep your bowel movements soft. However, if your bowel movements become too soft or watery, stop taking the stool softener.

**Care of your Incision**

- **Sit in 3-4 inches of warm water** in your tub for about ten minutes, 3 times a day and after each bowel movement (or more often if you want) to ease discomfort and swelling. Avoid using hot water, which may increase swelling.

- For **incision care**, place a dry cotton ball over the opening of your anus to keep your incision dry for better healing. To remove the cotton ball, just soak the cotton ball with water or in the warm bath. To clean yourself, wipe gently with a wet cotton ball or use baby wipes.

- You may notice that you are having trouble urinating after your surgery. It is sometimes easier to urinate while sitting in the bath tub.

**Activity**

You may return to your normal activities as you feel up to them. You should not drive while you are taking pain medicine that may cause drowsiness.

**When to Call your Health Care Provider**

- If you have a temperature of 101.5 degrees or higher
- If you are having problems urinating
- If bleeding becomes severe
- If you have questions or problems
- For a return appointment 3 - 4 weeks after surgery

- During weekday hours of 8 am to 4:30 pm call 614-293-3230.
- After hours and on weekends call 614-293-8000 and ask for the surgical resident on call.

This handout is a guide. Patients heal differently. Do not be alarmed if it takes you longer to recover.

If you would like more written information, please call the Library for Health Information at (614)293-3707. You can also make the request by e-mail: health-info@osu.edu.

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- Upon request all patient education handouts are available in other formats for people with special hearing, vision, and language needs, call (614) 293-3191.