

DISCHARGE & POST-OPERATIVE CARE INSTRUCTIONS

FOR EMERGENCIES: contact the doctor's consulting rooms during office hours or go to Mediclinic Morningside hospital ER, which is open 24/7, 365 days a year.

The following are normal post-operative expectations:

- * **Swelling:** Swelling in the tissues directly underneath or around the cut(s) is normal and usually takes +/- 6 weeks to completely subside.
- * **Itchiness:** Itchiness around the wound is a good sign because it means that your wounds are healing.
- * **Blood on the plaster:** A small amount of blood or clear/pink-tinged fluid (serous or serosanguinous drainage) on the dressing is normal and expected.
- * **Dark Scar:** It is normal to have a prominent or dark scar after an operation. The cut usually first becomes dark or red and then over time fades to become a light colour or the same as your skin.
- * **Tiredness:** Fatigue or tiredness is normal after an operation and can last for up to 3 weeks.
- * **Redness & tenderness:** Around the incision site is normal after surgery and will dissipate with time.
- * **Bruising:** Around the incision site is normal after surgery and will dissipate with time.

Wounds/dressings.

- * Incision sites are covered with a waterproof plaster. **Your plaster will be removed at your follow up appointment, please do not remove beforehand unless instructed by your doctor (if it becomes wet/dirty or starts falling off, then you can replace with a waterproof dressing which you can get from a pharmacy).**
- * You may or may not have a drain in place after surgery. The drain will be removed when drainage is at the desired levels.
- * You can shower 24 hours after surgery. The dressings will protect the wound/incision site.
- * Avoid submerging the incisions sites in water so **avoid bathing for the first 7-10 days.**
- * Avoid getting the dressings soaking wet. A few splashes of water on the dressing from the shower is fine - dry it by putting gentle pressure on it with your towel.

Driving after surgery

- * It is not advisable to drive for one week after your procedure.
- * **Do not drive while taking the pain control medication**, as they can have a sedating effect.

Early mobilization after surgery:

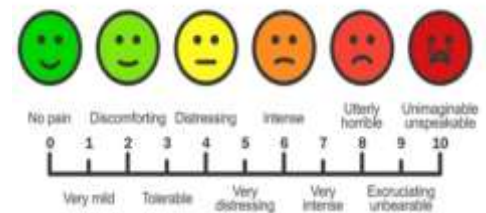
- * It is particularly important to start moving as soon as possible after surgery.
- * This will enhance blood circulation in your body, and aid in healing.
- * It also prevents blood clots from forming in your legs and going to your lungs which can be fatal.
- * **Breathing exercises:** Take 10 deep breaths every hour to avoid secretion build-up in your lungs. Secretion build-up can lead to chest infections. This is especially important for patients who smoke or have known lung disease.

Exercise and returning to normal duties:

- * Expect to feel **tired for a couple of days** after surgery.
- * You need to take things easy and gradually return to normal duties, as you feel able to.
- * Recovering from surgery takes about 2 weeks, total healing takes the body around 6 weeks.
- * **ABDOMINAL SURGERY PATEINTS: Do not lift heavy weights (more than 5kg) for 3-4 weeks after surgery. This is to prevent a rupture where the cuts were made and allow healing to take place inside.**
- * You should be able to return to work 2 weeks after your surgery. Please ask the doctor or the rooms for a sick note if required/not received.

Pain and pain management:

- * Experiencing pain after surgery is common and expected.
- * It is your body's way of signalling that it is in the process of healing.
- * Every person is unique and has a different tolerance level to pain.
- * Pain is measured on a numeric scale of 0-10.
- * Managing your pain is essential for your comfort and recovery.
- * Your doctor will prescribe pain medications to help alleviate discomfort, and the nursing staff will provide you with these medications.
- * In the ward inform the nursing staff if your pain that is not relieved by prescribed pain killers. (Oral pain medication takes between 30-60min to start working)
- * *At home it is crucial to follow the medication instructions regarding dosage and frequency.*
- * **Coughing, laughing and sneezing is painful after abdominal surgery and will settle with time.**



Potential side effect of medication:

- * Medication, especially pain management medication, can cause constipation.
- * Increase your fibre and water consumption to try and minimize this.
- * Nausea, vomiting, and sedation are common side effects of medication.

What do I need to tell my doctor?

- * If you observe excessive, heavy, or actively dripping blood; yellow purulent discharge; or if the wound develops a foul odour.
- * Fever and chills.
- * Post surgical pain should start to wear off within 7-10 days, ***should severe pain persist longer than this period, contact Dr Mitchell and Dr Munda's consulting rooms or go to Mediclinic Morningside emergency room where they will contact the doctor on call.***
- * Increasing swelling, tenderness, or redness at or around the wound/s
- * If you have not had **normal bowel function for 4 days after your procedure.**
- * If you are having difficulty urinating.