

**POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR  
ANAL SURGERY**  
Division of Colon and Rectal Surgery  
Tufts University School of Medicine  
Office (T): 617-636-6190 Office (F): 617-636-9095

**Wound Care**

- \* Take all the bandages off in the late afternoon or evening and take the first hot sitz bath; the bath water should be as hot as tolerable, without causing burns.
- \* It is NOT necessary to add anything to the water (such as Epsom salt)
- \* Hot baths should be used at least 3-4 times each day for comfort, especially after each bowel movement
- \* Expect some oozing or slight bleeding that may persist for several days, mostly with bowel movements
- \* Bandages are **NOT** necessary, but may be used as desired to absorb any drainage and to protect your undergarments

**Pain**

- \* The anesthetic that was injected at the time of surgery should last 3-6 hours
- \* It is normal for the anal area to be **very painful for several days**, and especially after the initial bowel movements
- \* **HOT BATHS PROVIDE THE BEST PAIN RELIEF**, and should be used liberally
- \* The prescription you have been given is for a strong narcotic pain medication
- \* Use the pain medication as necessary, but be aware that it will cause some degree of constipation
- \* If the pain is less severe, Advil (up to 600 mg every 4 hours) or Tylenol (up to 650mg every 4 hours) should be substituted. Do not exceed 3000mg of Tylenol in a 24hr period.

**Diet**

- Eat as much fiber as possible: fruits, vegetables, salads, whole grain breads, bran cereals, bran muffins, prunes and prune juice
- Drink **lots** of fluids: water and juices
- Avoid spicy foods until the wounds are healed, as this may cause increased pain with bowel movements

**Bowel Movements**

- \* It is common not to move your bowels for 2 or 3 days after surgery
- \* It is important to try to avoid becoming constipated
- \* A high fiber diet is essential
- \* Take a stool softener such as Colace three times a day or a fiber supplement such as Metamucil once or twice a day.
- \* Excessive pressure in the rectum (or even pain) may indicate the need to have a bowel movement
- \* If a laxative is required usually try two tablespoons of Milk of Magnesia; if this is not effective, take 6 oz of Citrate of Magnesia
- \* **THE FIRST BOWEL MOVEMENT HURTS!!!**

**Activity**

- You may resume normal activities, including exercising, as soon as you feel up to it
- You can return to work whenever you feel able, typically after a few days.

**Things To Watch For**

**A small amount of bleeding or oozing is normal**, especially with bowel movements; if bleeding is heavy, or does not stop after bowel movements, call me immediately.

-It is not unusual to have difficulty urinating after surgery; often it is necessary to urinate while sitting in the hot bath; frequent urination of very small volumes is abnormal and requires that you call me. If you have not urinated at all by the first evening, **YOU MUST CALL!! The Main Hospital number is 617-636-5000 ask for the colorectal surgeon on call. Do not call the office telephone number after 4:30pm.**

\*Although very rare, infection can occur. Signs of infection include but are not limited to: pain that does not resolve with bowel movements and/or the standard doses of prescribed medications, increased swelling, redness or drainage from the area, or fever.

### **Additional Information**

\* If you do not already have a follow up appointment, please call my office within a few days for a post operative check-up. I want to see you approximately 4 weeks after your surgery.

\* If there are questions or problems I can be reached seven days a week. Monday – Friday during the day (8:30am – 4:30pm) directly by calling my office at 617-636-6190. After hours, holidays or weekends, call the Main Hospital 617-636-5000 and have the operator page the colorectal surgeon on call.

***\*If you feel that you are having an emergency and you cannot reach me immediately, please go to the nearest Emergency Room for evaluation.***