

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:
(F. Ames Smith Jr. M.D. F.A.C.S.)

- Recommend non-strenuous activity for the first few days after surgery. It is important to walk frequently, and avoid staying in bed for prolonged periods of time.
- Please avoid lifting more than about 10 pounds, until cleared by me. In general, my preference is that you avoid heavy lifting until I see you back in the office.
- No driving for about 3 days
- In general, I recommend clear liquids for the first 12-24 hours after surgery, and like for you to advance to solid foods slowly as your situation allows. If you feel that you are having a lot of nausea, I recommend staying on clear liquids until feeling better.
- Your incisions will typically be closed with dissolvable sutures, and will be sealed with glue (this wears off over a several week period of time). Because of this, you can shower on the first day after surgery.
- Occasionally, we will place sterile dressings (mostly if skin staples are used) which you can leave on for 2-3 days. Advisable to sponge bath while the dressings are on.
- For laparoscopic operations, we use CO₂ gas to inflate the abdomen. There can be some residual gas in the abdomen after the operation which causes shoulder pain, bloating. This resolves fairly rapidly over the first few days
- It is normal for incisions to appear “puffy,” mildly red, “swollen.” After a few weeks, the area beneath the incision may feel hard or firm. This is called a healing ridge and is related to the healing process. These things do not require a call. I do recommend that you use ice liberally over the first few days which will help with swelling.
- For hernia operations, it is normal to have considerable swelling—this typically will subside over time. Also, it is expected that the testicles can feel sore, or seem swollen postoperatively.
- It is important to avoid constipation—can drink prune juice, try milk of magnesia, or any other gentle laxative if needed
- Please schedule follow-up as soon as possible (472-1381). We cannot renew any pain medicine prescriptions unless a follow-up appointment is scheduled (generally, we do not renew pain medicine prescriptions over the weekend)
- Please notify if you should develop fever (over 101 degrees), sign of infection—redness, foul smelling drainage, or you have concerns about your course of recovery
- The nurses will instruct in drain care if a drain is used. This typically stays in about 7 days or until the drainage is less than about 30 cc/day.
- **Please report any worrisome symptoms or issues.** You can reach me at the medical exchange **458-1121**. On certain days, or certain weekends, one of my surgical partners may be covering for me. We are here to help you—if you need to reach us, please call. We appreciate having you as a patient.