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Hernia Repair: Post-Operative Care

1. It is likely that you will have some discomfort for the first two to three weeks after surgery. At the time of discharge from the hospital, you will have been given a prescription for pain medication. When taking pain medication, be careful as you walk or climb stairs. Dizziness is not unusual.
2. Swelling and bruising of the scrotum is normal and will take about three weeks to completely resolve.
3. **Applying ice to the incision for 48 hours post-operatively is the preferred treatment for soft tissue injury. Cold therapy will not reduce edema that is already present, but it will help prevent more swelling and ease discomfort on affected site. Ice compresses can be continued after the first 48 hours as needed. Apply them intermittently for periods no longer than 20 minutes. Longer time exposure to cold could limit blood flow to injured tissues and cause secondary damage.**
4. A small amount of bright red blood showing through the gauze dressing is to be expected. Do not be alarmed. If you feel that the amount is excessive, call my office. You may replace bloody bandages with clean ones. If there isn't any bleeding, the wound need not be covered with gauze.
5. Do not make any important judgment decisions for 24 hours after anesthesia.
6. A low-grade fever (to 101°) is common 2 – 3 days post-operatively. This fever can be lessened by coughing, deep breathing and walking. There is no danger that these activities will disrupt your incisions. Taking pain medication one hour before activities and placing a pillow over your lower abdomen when coughing will help decrease discomfort.
7. You should shower 48 hours after surgery. Before showering, remove the scrotal supporter and gauze dressings. Do not remove the 2 – 3 steri-strips directly on the incisions. Discard the dirty dressings. Allow the warm water to run over the incisions and wash gently with soap. Pat dry.
8. You should shower every day until you return to see Dr. Goldstein. Do not take tub baths for at least one week after surgery.
9. Remove the steri-strips in 10 days. There are no stitches to be removed. The stitching is beneath the skin and dissolves.

10. You will feel a hard ridge, as if a pencil is buried under the skin, where the incision is. This is from the muscle sewn up under the skin and is normal. It will gradually soften and flatten out over the next few weeks.
11. **Do not return to work for one week post-operatively.** If, however, your job involves only desk work and light activity, you may return 3 or 4 days after the surgery.
12. No sexual intercourse is allowed for one week post-operatively.
13. **No heavy work, strenuous exercise or sports are allowed for 3 weeks post-operatively.**
14. Thereafter, you may resume normal activities as you feel up to it.
15. Remember that your pain medication may cause constipation. To avoid straining, increase your fiber intake (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, figs, etc.) and drink lots of water. If necessary, you can take 2 tablespoons of Milk of Magnesia at bedtime. You may also take Colace (stool softener) while you are taking the pain medication.
16. **Follow-up visit:** As soon as possible you should call to make an appointment to see Dr. Goldstein one month after surgery. You may be asked to return for another visit if necessary.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office.