



**Marc Goldstein, MD, DSc (hon), FACS**

Matthew P. Hardy Distinguished Professor of Reproductive Medicine, and Urology  
Surgeon-in-Chief, Male Reproductive Medicine and Surgery

Cornell Institute for Reproductive Medicine  
525 East 68th Street, Box 269  
New York, NY 10065

Telephone: 212-746-5470

Fax: 212-746-0977

mgoldst@med.cornell.edu

www.maleinfertility.org

### Microsurgical Varicocelectomy – 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 penis and scrotum are 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. Discard the dirty dressings. Allow the warm water to run over the incisions and wash gently with soap. You may shower with the steri-strips in place. It is important to keep the surgical area clean. Do not rub hard or scrub the incision or steri-strips, dry gently.
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. **DO NOT** remove the steri-strips placed directly on the incisions until at least 10 days after surgery. After 10 days if the steri-strips had not fallen off, you can peel them off gently with the help of a q-tip soaked in water or an adhesive remover wipe.
10. If you notice or feel small bumps or lumps around the surgical site, these are the incision knots buried underneath your skin. In time they will settle, shrink, and soften.
11. You will feel a hard ridge as if a pencil is buried under the skin where the incision is. This is from the muscles sewn up under the skin and is normal. It will gradually soften and flatten out over the next few weeks.
12. After surgery you may feel a “hardness” or tube-like structure above the testes. This is caused by thrombosis (clotting off of) the blood vessel of the varicoceles. This will dissolve in 6 – 12 weeks.
13. Enlarged, hard veins on the penis are normal following your surgical procedure. They will resolve in 2 – 3 weeks.
14. **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.
15. **Do not drive for the first week after the surgery,** but you can ride in a car if someone else is driving.
16. **No heavy work, swimming, strenuous exercise, or sports are allowed for 3 weeks post-operatively.**
17. No sexual intercourse is allowed for one week post-operatively.
18. Thereafter, you may resume normal activities as you feel up to it.
19. 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.

**Follow-up visits:** You should make an appointment to see Dr. Goldstein for a post-varicocelectomy visit one month after surgery. You should also make an appointment for a semen analysis 3 months after surgery. Another semen analysis will be done 6 months after surgery and then every 6 months until your wife becomes pregnant.

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