Adult Varicocelectomy
Home Care After Surgery

This handout tells you how to take care of yourself when you go home after varicocele surgery.

What to Expect after Surgery

1. For about 2 to 3 days, you will feel discomfort at the incision and in the affected side of your scrotum. Pain medicine will be prescribed for you or you may use over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol®. Take your pain medicines as directed by your doctor. After about 3 days, the pain should lessen.

2. You may notice increased swelling in your scrotum. This swelling may last for about a week.

3. Do not drive for 24 hours after your surgery or while taking pain medicines, as your judgment and reflexes may not be normal even though you may feel fine.

4. During your recovery, your body will be using energy to heal itself. You might easily become tired. This fatigue will gradually decrease, but you need to rest when you become tired.

5. You can start taking your usual medicines again after surgery, unless you are using aspirin, ibuprofen or blood thinners. You will need to check with your doctor before you start these medicines again.

6. Sometimes redness, warmth, or soreness occurs at the IV (Intravenous) site. This can be relieved by putting a warm wet washcloth on the site 4 times a day. Call your doctor or nurse if this does not get better in 1-2 days or if it gets worse.

Incision Care

1. Leave your dressing on for 24 hours. After 24 hours, take it off and leave the incision open to the air. There will be steri-strips covering your incision. These will fall off on their own in 1 – 2 weeks. If clothing irritates your incision, put a clean, dry 4 x 4 gauze pad over it.

2. Keep your incision clean and dry for 24 hours. You may shower after 24 hours. Do not soak in a bathtub, whirlpool, hot tub, and do not swim for 1 week.

3. Check your incision daily. Call your doctor if you notice any of these signs
   - Skin around incision is red and hot.
   - Pus-like drainage comes from incision.
   - Temperature is over 100.5º F for two readings taken 4 hours apart.
   - Incision site is painful after 5 days.
   - Bleeding is excessive (the dressing becomes soaked within 1 hour).
   - Scrotum swelling lasts longer than 5 days.
Activity Guidelines

- For the first 2 weeks, do not lift more than 10 pounds. Do light exercise, no jogging, aerobics, running, jumping, or heavy housework until your doctor gives you the okay. You may climb stairs if you go slowly.
- You should slowly increase your activity, building rest times into each day.
- Bend from the knees, not the waist, when picking something up. Keep your back straight. Grab the object you want to lift firmly with both hands and hold it close to your body. Straighten your knees, use your leg muscles to evenly support the weight of the object.
- You need to talk with your surgeon about returning to work.
- Sexual activity can be resumed when you are feeling physically able, but avoid straining.
- If you are having any pain at the incision it means too much stress or straining against the incision.

Diet

1. Do not drink alcohol for 24 hours after your surgery or while taking narcotic pain medicine.
2. After your surgery, if you feel sick to your stomach, do not eat a full meal. Start out slowly with clear liquids, like tea, broth, or jello. You may add more solid foods to your diet as your nausea goes away.
3. You can return to your usual diet as soon as you are ready. Your diet should include fruits, vegetables, and plenty of fluids.

Bowel Habits

It is important to avoid constipation as it may cause strain on the incision. You should have a bowel movement within 2-3 days after surgery. Along with diet, you can use Milk of Magnesia or Metamucil® to help with constipation. Patients often have constipation after surgery due to the medicines used during and after surgery. To prevent constipation we recommend you start taking an over-the-counter stool softener or laxative such as Colace®, docusate, pericolace or senna, or Miralax® per specific instructions, for about 2 weeks after surgery. However, stop taking if you have diarrhea.

When to Call your Doctor

- Pain is not made better by rest, ice and medicine.
- Scrotum swelling lasts longer than 5 days.
- Increased redness, swelling, discharge, or drainage from your incision.
- Excessive bleeding from incision (the dressing becomes soaked within 1 hour).
- You have trouble or not able to urinate.
- Increased bleeding or blood clots in urine.
- Burning or pain with urination that does not improve after increasing fluids.
- Fever above 100º F.

Follow-Up Care

Your follow-up visit will be made for you before you leave.
Please Note: If your doctor has given you other instructions, please follow those instructions.

Phone Numbers

Call if you have any questions or problems.

**Monday - Friday 8:00am-4:30pm call:**
Urology Clinic
(608) 263-4757

**Nights and Weekends:** The clinic number will connect you the hospital paging operator. Ask for the Urology Resident on call. Give the operator your name and phone number with the area code. The resident will call you back.

If you live out of the area, please call 1-800-323-8942.

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Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person’s health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 3/2017. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#4620.