

# Discharge Instructions for Inguinal Hernia Repair

A hernia is a tear or weakness in the wall of the abdomen. This weakness may be present at birth. Or it can be caused by the wear and tear of daily living. Excessive body weight also plays a major role in the development of a hernia. Hernias may get worse with time or with physical stress.

## Activity After Surgery

- After surgery, take it easy for the rest of the day.
- Apply ice packs over your incision for 24 hours keep it on for 20 minutes and off for 20 minutes. This reduces the swelling and inflammation and reduces the pain felt.
- Don't drive while you are still taking narcotic pain medication and don't drive for at least two weeks after the operation.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 15 pounds until your doctor says it's okay.
- Don't mow the lawn, use a vacuum cleaner, or do other strenuous activities until your doctor says it's okay.
- You may walk indoors, outdoors, up and down stairs.
- Avoid constipation:
  - Eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
  - Drink 6–8 glasses of water a day, unless otherwise instructed.
  - Use a laxative or a mild stool softener if your doctor says it's okay.
- Sexual activity as tolerated. If it starts to hurt, please stop.

## Bandage and Incision Care

- Remove any gauze bandage in 48 hours
- If strips of tape were used to close your incision called steri strips, don't pull them off. Let them fall off on their own.
- You may shower in 48 hours.
- Wash your incision with liquid soap and water. Pat it dry. Don't use oils, powders, or lotions on your incision.

## When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor immediately if you have any of the following:

- A large amount of swelling or bruising (some testicular swelling and bruising is common)
- Bleeding
- Increasing pain
- Increased redness or drainage of the incision
- Fever 100.5°F, or higher
- Trouble urinating
- Nausea or vomiting

## Follow-Up

Make a follow-up appointment for two weeks after your surgery.