
POST-OP RECOVERY (ABDOMINAL WALL HERNIA REPAIR)

Apart from the specific instructions given to you depending on the type of surgery you have undergone, the basic general instructions that you should follow after your surgery are as follows:

1. Take pain relieving and other medications as advised. Pain relieving medication should be taken with food. After the first 72 hours at home, take the pain medication only when needed.
2. Wear the abdominal binder, that provides support to the area. It will help reduce swelling and pain. The binder can be removed to wash and shower, but should be worn at night and day. If causing skin irritation can be worn over a T shirt or vest.
3. Do not drink alcohol, drive a vehicle, operate any machinery or sign a legal document for the first 24 hours after the surgery as the effect of the sedative and/ or the aesthesia administered during the surgery may last for the first 24 hours of the surgery.
4. Dressings should be removed after 5 days (unless otherwise instructed). It is not uncommon for a small amount of blood to be visible under the dressing, this is not of concern and the dressing should be left sterile and intact. After the dressings are removed you may shower and bathe normally. Avoid picking at the wounds or applying creams, the scab is the body's natural dressing.
5. Avoid strenuous activity, as advised. Remember that it is easier to prevent developing pain rather than managing it once it has already developed. Rest for a few days after the surgery is advisable, but keep mobile.
6. Keep the dressing clean and dry to promote wound healing. The dressings are waterproof so you can shower and pat them dry afterwards.
7. If you experience pain on performing a particular activity, this is your body telling you that it is not quite ready. Try to avoid painful activities until further healing has occurred.
8. Eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of non-alcoholic and non-caffeinated drinks. Everything is ok in moderation
9. There may also be bruising or discolouration around the wound.
10. Schedule your follow up appointment with your doctor as advised, usually 2-3 weeks

Please consult your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Increased drainage from the incision
- Increased redness around the operated area
- Large amount of swelling under the wound
- Foul odour
- Fever greater than 38.0 degrees C.
- Suspected recurrence of your hernia.
- Sudden calf pain or shortness of breath
- Chest pain