SURGICAL SERVICES

Post-Operative Instructions for Ostomy Reversal

PAIN:

You will have some discomfort after your surgery; this should not be severe. You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Please take your pain medication as instructed. Use Tylenol™ (acetaminophen) and or Advil ™ (Ibuprofen) as directed for pain medication. Your surgeon may have also given you a prescription for extra pain medication; use it only as directed.

OPERATIVE SITE:

Your incision will likely be where your ostomy was. It will be closed using staples or dissolvable sutures and covered with a waterproof dressing. Change the dressing if it lifts, loosens or becomes wet or soiled. You may shower but keep the incision as dry as possible. After 3 days, you can remove the waterproof dressing. Continue with gauze dressing if it is still draining or for comfort to protect your staples. Your staples will be removed in 10-14 days at your surgeon’s office or at your family doctor’s office. If your surgeon chooses to pack your incision rather than using staples or dissolvable sutures, home care may be arranged for your dressing changes. Dressing supplies are available to purchase at your local pharmacy or in the QCH Gift Box.

ACTIVITY:

Once you are discharged you may resume your usual activities gradually, do not lift anything heavy (20 pounds or 9 kgs) until advised by your surgeon. Mild exercise, especially walking, is encouraged.

DIET:

You can return to a **REGULAR** diet after surgery. Ensure you are consuming regular meals and snacks to promote normal bowel habits. It may be helpful to eat smaller, more frequent meals (4 to 6 meals spaced evenly throughout the day) to increase intake. Take small mouthfuls and make sure to chew your food well. This will help you digest your food better. Aim to drink 8-10 cups of fluids per day to ensure good hydration and help prevent constipation. Be aware that caffeinated beverages, alcohol and carbonated beverages may increase frequency of bowel movements and/or cause loose stools.

CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE 🡪

Information is available in alternate formats upon request

Trial and error will help you to determine what or if any foods disagree with you.

*If you are feeling anxious about resuming a regular diet, a* ***TRANSITIONAL LIGHT*** *diet can be followed for 2-3 weeks before resuming a normal diet. Please see the “Bowel Resection Surgery” booklet for information.*

FOLLOW UP:

Contact your surgeon’s office to schedule a follow-up appointment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

It is common to have bowel problems after a stoma reversal. You may have symptoms such as:

* Loose stool - stool that is looser and/or more watery
* Incontinence - loss of control of your bowel, passing of stool and/or gas
* Bowel urges - a sudden need to go to the bathroom
* Spasm and/or pain are common as long as they are not getting worse

To help manage these symptoms keep a food record to track what you eat and how it affects you. Dealing with bowel problems can be challenging. If you are having problems with these symptoms, contact your surgeon’s office to speak with the surgeon or nurse. If you are experiencing any of the above symptoms, consider contacting a physiotherapist in the community for pelvic floor rehabilitation to help strengthen your core and pelvic muscles.

Contact your surgeon or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:

* Excessive bleeding from your incision that saturates your dressing
* Increased redness or swelling around your incision
* A large amount of drainage on the dressing
* Foul smelling yellow-green discharge from your incision
* Nausea and/or vomiting
* Severe pain
* Elevated temperature (38ºC or 100.4ºF) and/or chills lasting more than 24 hours

The information contained on this sheet is provided to you and your family to help you in your recovery from this procedure. This document is not intended to replace medical advice from your doctor or healthcare team. If you require more specific/additional medical advice, contact your doctor and healthcare team about your particular healthcare needs.

Protect yourself! Clean your hands frequently using soap and water or

hand sanitizer and ask that your healthcare providers and visitors do the same. Clean hands save lives.