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Postoperative Laparoscopic Nissen Fundoplication Information

Surgery You have just had a laparoscopic Nissen fundoplication. This procedure involves fixing your hiatal hernia and recreating your lower esophageal sphincter in order to prevent heartburn. This is done through five small incisions.

Pain If your prescription was not mailed to your pharmacy before surgery, upon discharge from the hospital, you will be given a prescription for liquid pain medication. If you are unable to have a bowel movement following surgery, a mild laxative such as Milk of Magnesia may be used. Being up and about after surgery is also helpful in regulating bowel function.

Diet This is the hardest part of your recovery. During the operation your stomach was wrapped around your esophagus and the swelling after surgery will last for about 6 weeks. During that time period food will have to go through an opening the size of a straw initially and eventually will enlarge to the size of a garden hose.

For the first week after surgery we ask that you drink only liquids. The nutritionist in the hospital will have given you a complete list of foods that you can and cannot have.

After the first week you may start having pureed foods for the next 4 weeks. Again a list of food will be given to you in the hospital.

A general guideline to use is that in the beginning any food that could go in through a straw is ok and as your body recovers you may add more solid food. If you feel like food is getting stuck in your stomach, drink plenty of water and avoid that food for a few weeks.

After about 5- 6 weeks your esophagus should heal to its normal size and you will be able to start eating regular food without restrictions.

Incision Your incisions are closed using a number of sutures below the skin surface. When you remove the outer dressing (see bathing instructions below for when to remove the dressing), you will find a special ribbed tape covering the incision. The ribbed tape will fall off on its own

Bathing You are asked to keep the outer dressing over the incision dry and in place for 1 day following surgery. On the day after surgery, remove the dressing. It is now safe for you to get into the shower.

Be careful not to scrub the incision lines, simply let the water run over the incision and gently pat the area dry.

Activity Following surgery, you are encouraged to do as much walking as is comfortable. You may climb stairs, taking them one at a time and slowly.

You are not to operate a vehicle while you are having discomfort or taking pain

medication. This will interfere with your ability to drive safely. Your surgeon will tell you when it is safe to resume driving.

You are asked to not do any lifting over 30 pounds for the first two weeks following surgery. The doctor will tell you when it is safe to do more. If lifting causes pain in your incision, please stop. If pain persists, call the office and speak with the nurse.

Precautions Although not commonly seen, any incision is susceptible to infection. If you develop a fever of 101 degrees or above, have unexpected pain, redness or drainage from any incision please contact my office.

Follow-up Please call the office a day or two after you go home to schedule your postoperative appointment for approximately two weeks after surgery

If you have any questions about your recovery, please do not hesitate to call our office.