Hernia Repair Instructions Following Surgery

• Everyone’s pain tolerance is different. You may be **VERY** sore for 3 days following your surgery. Each day will get better, thereafter (i.e. you will begin to notice improvement on day 4-5).

• You may or may not turn black and blue around your incision and surrounding tissue. If you had a groin hernia, your scrotum and penis may turn black and blue and will become swollen. The swelling may become severe at times. This is normal, however **if at any point you become unable to urinate go directly to the emergency room (ER)**.

• You may apply ice to the incision for the first 2 days after your surgery. Be sure to place a towel between your skin and the ice pack to avoid direct contact. After the 2nd post-operative day a heating pad may be used to help reduce swelling.

• **IF A DRAIN IS NOT PRESENT** - you may shower on the 3rd post op day. Remove all dressings prior to showering. Leave steri-strips on.
  
  o If you have tape directly on your skin (steri-strips), leave those on and do not remove them until post-op day 7-10. They help to give your incision additional strength.

  o Do NOT apply any ointment or cream to your incision site until after 5 post-operative days.

• You will be sent home on pain medicine. While on pain medicine, it is a good idea to take a stool softener to counteract constipation. You can also take Milk of Magnesia, MOM. All are over the counter. You **should not** drive while on pain medicine. If you find that the pain medicine is too strong, you may take Ibuprofen (Advil) instead, if you usually take this as a pain reliever.

• You may walk as much as you want. You may also do cardio, but avoid exercises that use your abdominal muscles or lifting weights.

• **For Incisional, Umbilical, or Recurrent Hernias**: If you have a drain in, *(usually a “JP” - Jackson Pratt)* you will not be able to shower until the drain is removed. This usually is removed in the office on the 3 post op day. **The limiting factor on when this should be removed is that you are having less than 30 mL of fluid in a full 24 hour period.** Call the office to make an appointment with the nurse practitioner or doctor to have your drain removed when you have less than 30 mL of output in 24 hours.
• **For Incisional, Umbilical, or Recurrent Hernias:** You may or may not be given an abdominal binder to wear after your hernia surgery, particularly umbilical and abdominal hernias. You should wear the binder until the drain is removed (call our office if this exceeds 4 days post-op). After the drain is removed, you do not need to sleep in the abdominal binder, but you should continue to wear this during the day when you are up moving about. The binder may be washed.

• Call the office for a follow up visit 1-2 weeks after your surgery (314-434-1211). Our surgeons are in the office 1 morning and 1 afternoon a week.

• If you have increasing redness around the incision sites, drainage, or fever above 101°F call the office or send the nurse a message through our patient portal. For after hours, call the Medical Exchange @ 314-364-5262.
  - Your incision itself will be red and may drain.
    - Clear to light pink/red drainage is normal a few days after surgery
    - You may apply loose dressings to stop any drainage from soiling clothes
  - Do NOT soak healing incision site(s) – i.e. a bath, hot tub, swimming pool

**Please also read the “Normal Findings” section on the front page of the “Procedures” tab.**