

MBBS (Hons) Syd. MMED (Clin Epi) FRACS
Colorectal and General Surgeon - Provider No. 065326DK

General post operative instructions after general surgery and instructions for wound care

These are general recommendations for most types of operations. Dr Pathma-Nathan will give you specific instructions as well, depending on the type of surgery you have.

Activity

It is common to feel generally weak and tired after any operation. The body takes time to recover from both anaesthetic and the surgery. **It is important to rest adequately.**

Walking

There are no restrictions at all. Start with small distances and increase as you feel stronger.

Stairs

There are no restrictions at all. Initially have someone assist you.

Lifting

If you have incisions, then do not lift more than 5kg for two-four weeks. If lifting causes pain, then stop. Some operations have longer restrictions. Dr Pathma-Nathan will advise.

Showers

There are no restrictions at all. Short showers are best. **Baths are not allowed.** Wounds can be washed. Dry thoroughly afterwards by patting dry or using a hair dryer, not too close to the skin.

Driving

Not permitted for up to 2 weeks after discharge. Not permitted if taking any strong painkillers.

Sexual Intercourse

May be recommenced as soon as comfort levels permit, or as advised.

Return to Work

You can return to work after two weeks if you have a desk job and after four weeks for physically demanding jobs. Some operations require a longer time off work. Dr Pathma-Nathan will advise.

Diet

Start with a fairly bland, soft diet. Drink plenty of fluids. Slowly increase solid food intake and gradually resume your normal diet. Remember a well balanced diet will help with healing.

MBBS (Hons) Syd. MMED (Clin Epi) FRACS
Colorectal and General Surgeon - Provider No. 065326DK

Wound Care

The dressing will be changed before you leave hospital. This dressing will come off after a couple of days. No further dressings are required, unless you feel more comfortable with one. Keep the wound clean and dry.

Most stitches are dissolving. Sometimes stitches or clips will need to be removed. Dr Pathma-Nathan will arrange this.

Medications

Continue to take your usual medications and any new medications given to you in the hospital. You will be given painkillers to take as you need them. Please note that some of these painkillers will cause constipation. Drink plenty of fluids and increase the fibre in your diet. Sometimes you may need to use a laxative such as Metamucil. Speak with your Doctor or Pharmacist about this.

When to contact your Doctor

- Fever greater than 38 degrees.
- Pain not controlled with painkillers.
- Redness or leakage from wound.
- Opening of the wound.
- Unable to pass urine or open bowels
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Any persistent heavy bleeding
- Any other unexpected problems

Contact Details

Dr Pathma-Nathan's Rooms: **1300 784 504**
Bronwyn Williams (Clinical Nurse): **0401 248 334**
Or contact the hospital