

Major Abdominal Surgery

After Visit Summary

This is general information. See your After Visit Summary for how to take care of yourself after surgery.

Your health care team will work with you to understand any challenges you have after your hospital stay. This will help your team make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

Before the Surgery

- Tell your health care provider if you:
 - are pregnant
 - have a latex allergy
 - have diabetes
 - take a blood-thinner medicine.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings.
- Arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive after the procedure.

Your Incision

- Steri-Strips® (paper-like tape) may have been placed on your incision. You may peel them off after 7 days.
- If your wound has staples, follow your health care provider's directions.
- If you have a drain, follow your health care provider's directions.
- Follow any directions your health care provider gives you.

What To Expect After Surgery

- You may be very tired for about 1 month after surgery.
- Once in a while you may see a small amount of drainage at the incision site. This is usually clear or a pink-tinged color. This is normal.

Pain Relief

- Take any prescription or over-the-counter medicine as directed.
- Follow your health care provider's directions for using ice or heat.

Activity

- When you return home from the hospital, take lots of rest periods several times a day.
- Slowly return to your normal activities.
- On days you don't feel well, reduce your activity and increase your rest time. Listen to your body — if an activity hurts, don't do it. But try the activity the next day.
- Your health care provider will tell you when it's OK for you to shower, drive, return to work and have sex.
- Follow your health care provider's directions for how much you can safely lift.
- Avoid tobacco and secondhand smoke. They can slow your recovery.

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Food and Beverages

- Eat well-balanced meals. Follow any instructions your doctor gave you.
- Try to drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water each day to help keep your stools soft.
- Avoid alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have:

- new pain or pain you can't control
- a temperature higher than 101 F
- increased shortness of breath
- signs of infection at your incision site:
 - pain
 - swelling
 - redness
 - odor
 - warmth
 - green or yellow discharge
- any questions or concerns.

Follow-up Appointment

Keep all follow-up appointments with your health care provider or specialist, even if you are feeling well.