

Discharge Instructions for Nephrectomy



You had a procedure to remove a kidney. This is called a nephrectomy. This procedure was done because one of your kidneys was not working correctly or because there was a tumor or cancer. Nephrectomy is also done to remove a healthy kidney from a donor for transplantation. You can live a normal, healthy life with one kidney.

Home care

- Shower as needed. Keep the wound dry with waterproof bandages that seal on all 4 sides. After showering, remove the waterproof pad and tape, then re-cover with a clean, dry bandage, or as directed by your provider.
- Don't swim or use a bathtub or hot tub until after your follow-up appointment and your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- Keep your cut (incision) clean and dry. Don't scrub the incision. Wash it gently with mild soap and warm water and pat it dry.
- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet.
- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day, unless your healthcare provider tells you to limit your fluids.
- Try not to get constipated.
 - Use laxatives, stool softeners, or enemas as directed by your healthcare provider.
 - Eat more high-fiber foods.
- Don't drive until you are off your pain medicine and pain-free. This may take 2 to 4 weeks.
- Don't worry if you feel more tired than normal. Extreme tiredness (fatigue) and weakness are common for a few weeks after this surgery. Don't push yourself. Rest as needed.
- Limit your activity to short walks. Slowly increase your pace and distance as you feel able.
- Don't do any strenuous activities, such as mowing the lawn, vacuuming, or playing sports.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for 4 weeks.
- Listen to your body. If an activity causes pain, stop.
- If you were asked to stop any medicines before the surgery, ask your healthcare provider when you may start taking them again. This is especially important in the case of blood thinners (anticoagulants or antiplatelet agents).

Follow-up care

Follow up with your healthcare provider, or as advised.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Redness, swelling, warmth, or pain at your incision site

- Drainage or pus from your incision
- Nausea or vomiting
- Increased pain
- Noticeable decrease in urine output
- Blood in your urine
- New or worsening symptoms

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