

Discharge Instructions for Open Appendectomy (Appendix Removal)



You have had an open appendectomy to remove your appendix. The appendix is a worm-shaped hollow pouch attached to the beginning of your large intestine. During an open appendectomy, one cut (an incision about 2 to 4 inches long) was made in your lower right side. A longer incision may have been used if the appendix burst. Here are guidelines to follow at home.

Incision care

Tips for taking care of your incision include:

- Wear loose-fitting clothes. This will help you be more comfortable and cause less irritation around your incision.
- Shower as instructed by your healthcare provider.
- Gently wash around your incision with soap and water.
- Don't bathe or soak in a tub or swim in a pool until your incisions are well healed and your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- If your incision was closed with small, white strips of tape, don't pull them. They will fall off on their own in about a week.

Diet

Diet tips after your appendix was removed:

- Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day, unless directed otherwise.
- Take a fiber-based laxative if you are constipated. You may also use a stool softener to prevent constipation.
- Eat a bland, low-fat diet at first. Slowly progress to a regular diet as instructed. Foods include:
 - Mashed potatoes
 - Plain toast or bread, crackers
 - Soup
 - Plain spaghetti
 - Rice
 - Macaroni (plain or with cheese)
 - Cottage cheese
 - Pudding
 - Low-fat yogurt
 - Low-fat milk
 - Canned fruit (except pineapple)

- Very ripe bananas

Activity

Follow these tips for activities:

- If you had general anesthesia, don't operate machinery or power tools, drink alcohol, or make major decisions for at least the first 24 hours.
- Slowly increase your activity level to help with your recovery. Start by doing light activities around your home once you feel able to do so.
- Don't drive until you are no longer taking prescription pain medicine.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds until your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- Limit sports and strenuous activities for 1 or 2 weeks, or as directed by your provider.

When to call your healthcare provider

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

- Swelling, oozing, more pain, or abnormal redness around the incision
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as advised by your provider
- Chills
- Increasing belly pain
- Severe diarrhea, bloating, or constipation
- Upset stomach (nausea) or vomiting
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Leg swelling

© 2000-2027 The StayWell Company, LLC. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions.
This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your Healthcare professional's instructions. Copyright Krames LLC.