

Surgical Services of Athens

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Hernia Surgery Post-Operative Instructions

- A post-operative visit has been arranged as noted in your paperwork. You may call the office during business hours to verify your post-operative visit date and time if needed. Office hours are 8am-12pm and 2pm-5pm Monday through Thursday and 8am-12pm on Friday.
- If you have undergone an inguinal hernia repair, you may walk, but should avoid prolonged standing or running. You will likely experience swelling at the site of the repair. This may be reduced with the application of an ice pack to the inguinal location for about 10 minutes, repeating every 2-3 hours for 1-2 days after the surgery. For men, a scrotal support is very beneficial to reduce swelling and post-operative discomfort.
- Your incisions may be closed with absorbable sutures, and if so, they will be covered with Steri-strips, which are a white tape-like dressing applied directly to the skin. These strips are covered with a Bandaid or a Tegaderm (a clear dressing). You may remove the Band-aids or clear dressings the day after surgery, but please try to leave the Steri-strips intact until they gradually lose adhesion and fall off. Do not panic if the Steri-strips fall off.
- Your incisions may be closed with staples. If present, there will either be a gauze dressing over the staples, or a PICO Vac battery powered dressing. If you have a standard dressing, it may be removed 24 hours after your surgery, unless otherwise instructed. It may be replaced as needed for protection of the underlying staples with a similar dry gauze dressing.
- If you have a PICO vac battery powered dressing, do not remove the dressing from the skin. It will be easily removed in the office in approximately one week or less.
- If you have a drain in place, please strip the drain tubing as instructed twice daily, and empty the bulb and record the output from the drain. Please bring your output log to the post-op office visit. It is normal to leak some watery fluid around the drain site, especially the first few days after surgery. We recommend that you take a dose of pain medication about 1 hour prior to the office visit if you anticipate drain removal during the visit.
- Prescription pain medication may cause nausea and will often cause constipation.
- The on-call physician will not be able to provide narcotic pain medication. By law, narcotic pain medication cannot be called in to a pharmacy.
- You may take an over the counter laxative as needed. It is normal to “feel” constipated after surgery for a few days.
- Notify us for fever over 101, or go to the nearest ER immediately for significant shortness of breath.
- Driving after surgery is not recommended until prescription pain medication is no longer needed. You may typically drive if narcotic pain medication has not been taken within 24 hours.
- You may shower 24 hours after surgery, unless otherwise instructed. If a drain is in place, you should keep the drain insertion site dry. The Steri-strips are water-resistant. Pat the incisions dry after the shower. You should avoid bathing in a bathtub or swimming until cleared by your surgeon. If you have a PICO Vac, the dressing is water-resistant, but the battery pack should remain dry. Simply press the on/off button on the battery back, and gently unscrew the battery pack tubing as instructed. After showering, pat the dressing dry, screw the battery pack tubing into place, and press the on/off button.

- Some redness around the incision is expected and does not require antibiotics; however, if the redness significantly expands in size or if a surgical site becomes increasingly tender, please call for further instruction.
- Do not take Tylenol (acetaminophen) within 4 hours of taking a narcotic pain medication.
- We recommend that you avoid strenuous activity until your follow-up visit, but regular walking is encouraged.
- An on-call physician is available at all times for emergencies; however, we ask that you call during business hours for non-emergent and routine questions.