


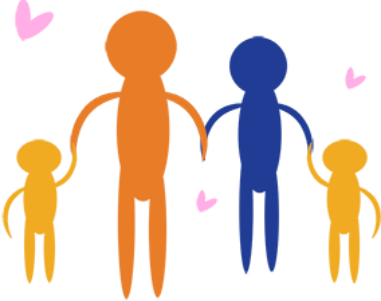
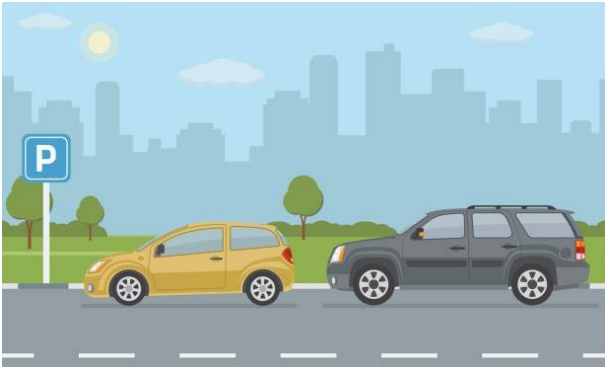





# Leaving the Hospital and Going Home


<p><b>Length of Stay</b></p>	<p>Most people will spend 1-2 nights in the hospital. You will be able to go home when it is clear that you can tolerate at least 4 ounces of fluid every hour, your pain is controlled, and you are not having any problems.</p>   <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wong-Baker FACES® Pain Rating Scale</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <span>0</span>      <span>2</span>      <span>4</span>      <span>6</span>      <span>8</span>      <span>10</span>          No Hurt      Hurts Little Bit      Hurts Little More      Hurts Even More      Hurts Whole Lot      Hurts Worst     </p>
<p><b>Preparing your home</b></p>	<p>Give some thought to your home and grocery needs before surgery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You need to have protein drinks at your home to drink after surgery.</li> <li>• It can be helpful to have someone stay with you at your home for the first few days after surgery.</li> </ul>  
<p><b>Drive home</b></p>	<p>You will need someone to drive you home from the hospital. If you live more than 60 minutes from the hospital, you must get out of the car every 60 minutes and walk around the car 3 or 4 times. You are still at a high risk for blood clots. When you are sitting in the car, you can exercise by pointing and flexing your feet — pretend you are pushing the car's gas pedal and then lift your toes toward your knees.</p> 

# Leaving the Hospital and Going Home

<p><b>Activity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Heavy lifting:</b> Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds until your surgeon says it is okay (usually 4-6 weeks after surgery). Your incisions need time to heal. Lifting too early can put you at risk for a hernia, which is when an organ or tissue squeezes through a weak spot in the abdominal wall.</li> <li>• <b>Stairs:</b> You may go up and down stairs.</li> <li>• <b>Driving:</b> You may <b>drive</b> when you have had no pain medicine for 24 hours and are able to move around comfortably in the vehicle.</li> <li>• <b>Exercise:</b> The only exercises that are allowed for the first 2 weeks are walking and riding a stationary bike. You should walk as much as you feel you can, as soon as you go home. Do not stand or sit in the same position for long periods of time.</li> </ul> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>
<p><b>Sexual Activity</b></p>	<p>You may have sexual activity when you feel physically able. For people with pregnancy potential, use reliable methods of birth control to keep from getting pregnant. To give your body time to heal, you should not get pregnant for 12-18 months after surgery.</p>
<p><b>Returning to work</b></p>	<p>Most patients return to work 2-4 weeks after surgery, but every patient is different. If you need a return-to-work note, please ask us at your first post-operative clinic visit. At that visit, we will have a better idea of how you are doing and when you can return to work.</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>

## After Surgery

*Knowing what to expect as you recover can make the process easier and less stressful. Below you will see a list of symptoms you may have during recovery, and tips on dealing with them.*

<b>Pain</b>	<p>You may have soreness or pain after surgery. We recommend using your abdominal binder, if it feels comfortable. She can wear your binder as long as it helps you. Also, we will provide you with multiple medications for pain. We will review these medications with you individually before you leave the hospital. If you are given a narcotic medication, it will be important to stop this medicine first as you recover, as it can cause severe constipation.</p>
<b>Constipation</b>	<p><b>Constipation can be a serious complication of surgery.</b> It can be caused by drinking less fluids, taking pain medicine, and being less active. Once your diet is advanced to softer foods, your bowel movements should become more consistent. <b>You need to make sure you are taking in at least 64 ounces of water every day to stay hydrated and keep from getting constipated.</b> If you do not have a bowel movement for 3 days, contact us. You may take Milk of Magnesia, Colace, Dulcolax, Magnesium Citrate, or Smooth Move Tea according to the directions on the bottle to help get your bowels moving again. If you are more than one month post-op, Miralax is a better option. Walking will help the bowels work better. Remember to walk a lot.</p> <div data-bbox="613 1528 1230 1732" style="text-align: center;"></div>
<b>Diarrhea</b>	<p>Diarrhea can have many causes. <b>Please contact us if you have diarrhea.</b></p>

## After Surgery

### Feeling sick to your stomach (nausea)

You may have nausea, but it usually goes away soon after surgery. Most of the time nausea is caused by not having enough fluids in your body (dehydration). **You need 64 ounces of water every day.** Some patients feel nauseated because of sinus drainage and may throw up clear, frothy mucus. Drinking a cup of warm decaf tea first thing in the morning can help clear the drainage from your pouch. **If you continue to throw up, call the office.**

Other causes of nausea include increased sensitivity to odors, eating and drinking too quickly, drinking with meals, and increased acid in the stomach. Sometimes decaf herbal tea with ginger, mint or chamomile can help calm your stomach. Sensitivity to odors will go away with time. Do not drink carbonated beverages and do not sip through a straw!

### Throwing Up (vomiting)

Vomiting is usually caused by eating too quickly, taking large bites of food, not chewing food well enough, drinking during meals, and over-eating. You will feel full quickly after surgery. Take your time, take dime-sized bites, and chew your food well. **Call the office if you vomit, especially if you have pain with vomiting.** Vomiting can lead to dehydration, which can be a serious health problem (see page 42).




*Caffeine-Free Tea*



**AVOID:**



## After Surgery

<b>Bruising or Swelling</b>	Some bruising and swelling is normal after surgery. <b>Contact us if you have a lot of bruising or swelling or if it gets worse.</b> You may feel a small lump in the incision; this is normal.	
<b>Hair loss</b>	Hair loss is common with rapid weight loss. The hair loss is temporary and your hair should grow back. Hair loss usually begins around three months after surgery and lasts until around nine months. Good amounts of protein along with a wide variety of healthy foods will help correct hair loss. You may take an over-the-counter hair growth supplement. If you feel you need this, contact your dietitian.	
<b>Scars</b>	It is normal for your scars to be red or dark pink. Scars are red because blood vessels are still working in the healing process. It takes the scar about a year to completely heal. If you are prone to keloid, you can cover your scars with silicone dressings (purchase online or at a pharmacy).	
<b>Numbness</b>	Nerves to the skin are sometimes cut with surgery. It is normal to experience numbness at the incision site. Sensation at those areas will return slowly over time.	
<b>Decreased Energy</b>	It is normal to feel tired after surgery. You must keep in mind that you have just undergone major surgery. Drinking lots of water and walking as you are able will help improve your energy. Once you are able to incorporate protein, this will also help your energy levels.	



## After Surgery

***If you are concerned that your symptoms are not normal or are getting worse, please call the clinic at: (504) 988-5110.***

**Please remember to call us right away if you have:**

- A temperature of more than 101° F (38.3° C)
- Increased redness or swelling at your incision sites
- Cloudy or bloody drainage from the incision
- Pain not improved by your pain medicine, or worsening pain
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Heart racing or palpitations

