What to expect after your Sling Incision Sling

POST-OPERATIVE PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS – FEMALE SLING PROCEDURE

You have opted to undergo surgery for bladder control problems. You have been informed of the risks and benefits of the surgery. We want you to have a clear idea of what to expect during the recovery phase of your surgery.

ANESTHESIA INSTRUCTIONS:
During the next 24 hours after surgery:
Do not operate a car or any type of vehicle or machinery (for example, a lawn mower).
Do not drink alcoholic beverages. You may be more sensitive to the effects of alcohol.
Avoid making important legal or financial decisions.
The medications used may cause nausea. If nauseated, avoid milk and other dairy products, fried or spicy foods. Start with clear liquids in small quantities and gradually increase to a regular diet until symptoms resolve.

Diet: You may return to your normal diet after surgery if tolerated.

Pain and energy: Pain will progressively decrease and energy will gradually increase. You will likely require pain medications for the first few days. You may be prescribed narcotic pain medications. If desired, you may take Tylenol or Ibuprofen instead of the prescribed but do not take both. Some narcotic pain medications already contain Tylenol so extra Tylenol should not be taken.

Bladder function: Any changes in bladder anatomy or location will likely result in a change in bladder function. This may result in urinary frequency, hesitancy, interrupted flow, urinary retention, persistent urine loss, and bladder overactivity. It may take 6 weeks or longer for bladder function to normalize. You may need medicines in order to help bladder function improve post-operatively. Less than satisfactory bladder function during the initial 6-8 weeks after surgery should not been seen as a sign of failure of a surgical procedure. It is merely a response to changing bladder position, nerve, or muscle injury during surgery, or associated healing from the surgical procedure. Patience is very important in allowing normal bladder function to resume.

Bowel function: It is especially important after to surgery to maintain good bowel habits, as constipation may be a problem. Drinking plenty of water, increasing the amount of fiber in your diet (i.e. cereals, fresh fruit and vegetables) and walking may help prevent constipation. If constipated, you may take milk of magnesia, stool softener or other laxatives. Usually Colace 100mg twice a day and 30cc (or a large spoonful) of Milk of Magnesia is sufficient.

Activities: Although the sling procedure is considered a minimally invasive procedure, it is still a surgical procedure and your body needs time to heal. Depending on your individual recovery you may be able to resume your normal daily activities at home within a few days. You should increase your activity progressively each day as your energy increases. Normal activity should be achieved in about two weeks, although the full healing takes about six weeks.

INCISION CARE: The incision may be washed with soap and water. After showering or washing gently, pat the incision dry with a clean towel. A dressing is not necessary, but may be desirable to protect your clothing, as there may be a minimal amount of drainage. Your stitches do not need to be removed as they will dissolve in about six weeks. Itching, bruising, a pulling sensation, and/or numbness around the incision is common. If your incision becomes hot, red, swollen, has a large amount of drainage, or persistently painful, please contact our office.
**VAGINAL BLEEDING AND DISCHARGE:** Initially you may have slight vaginal bleeding, which is usually followed by a dark brown discharge; this may last up to four to six weeks after vaginal surgery. The bleeding should not be heavier than a normal period. Use sanitary pads only, tampons are not permitted.

**When you go home you may:**
Walk around your neighborhood. This is encouraged. Stairs are permitted.
A shower may be taken 24 hours after your procedure. No tub baths.
Sexual intercourse may be resumed six weeks after surgery, after you have seen by your doctor.
Drive when you feel comfortable. **Driving is not permitted if you are using prescriptive pain medications.**
Do light housework and cooking
Avoid heavy lifting (about 5lbs) and any exertional activity for about six weeks.

**Follow-Up:** You will be given a follow up appointment. If you are unable to keep the appointment, please call the office to reschedule.

**CALL THE OFFICE IF YOU HAVE:**
If you have a temperature of 101 or above
Difficulty urinating
Nausea and Vomiting
Excessive bleeding or blood clots
Foul or purulent drainage
Reactions to any medications
Pain not relieved by your pain medication

Our offices are open as follows:

- **Monday - Friday**  8am – 4pm  410-266-8049
- **After 4pm, weekends and holidays** 443-481-3003