

## PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR NECK SURGERY

### Things to do:

- **Medications:** Certain medications (antibiotics, pain medication, steroids and nausea medications) may have been prescribed during the recovery period. All medications should be taken as directed. Your pharmacist is an excellent resource for any medication questions that may arise. Narcotic pain medication may cause drowsiness, nausea or constipation. Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while on pain medication. A stool softener may be taken to prevent constipation associated with your pain medication. Do not take any additional Tylenol, as the pain medication typically prescribed contains Tylenol. Taking medications with food may help prevent nausea.
- **Wound Care:** There may be a drain placed in your neck after surgery. The recovery nurse will instruct you on the care of that drain. The incision is covered with protective glue that requires no specific care. Apply a small amount of antibiotic ointment (i.e. *Bacitracin*) to the drain site twice a day.
- **Diet:** A liquid diet is typically initiated after your surgery and may be progressed to a light meal if you do not experience any persistent nausea and vomiting that may occur with general anesthesia. You may progress to a regular diet along with generous fluid intake the next day if you experience of nausea or vomiting.
- **Activity:** Elevate your head at all times for the first 4-5 days after surgery, even when you are sleeping. You may shower and wash your hair the day after your surgery. You may gradually increase your level of activity up to a pace of a 15-minute walk.
- **Follow up:** You will have a follow up appointment 1 week after surgery. Your drain will be removed at this time and any results from your surgery will be discussed.

### Things NOT to do:

- Avoid lifting anything greater than 15 pounds.
- Avoid exercising until your doctor approves.
- Do not take any Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Midol, Aleve, Advil, Coumadin or any other medications that may cause you to bleed easily for one week before and one week after surgery. If you are uncertain, contact your pharmacist or my office.
- Avoid direct sunlight to the incision site.

It is normal to have some discomfort after any surgery. You may have a sore throat or hoarseness from the breathing tube placed during surgery to help you breath while under general anesthesia.

My office is eager to support you through this process. Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or problems. Call my office if you have excessive bleeding, swelling, increased warmth or redness at surgical site, drainage at surgical site, persistent fever >102, severe pain not relieved by pain medication, continued nausea and vomiting, shortness of breath or any other concerns.