



DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER VASCULAR PROCEDURES

HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF WHEN YOU RETURN HOME

Incision Care:

- You may wash your incision gently with Dial Soap on a clean wash cloth. Rinse well under a gentle shower stream, and pat dry with a clean towel.
- If your incision is draining a small amount of fluid, cover with a sterile gauze and secure with paper tape.
- Incision should be cleaned once a day.
- Contact your Vascular Surgeon's office (Mon – Fri, 8 am to 4:30 pm) or if after 4:30 pm or on weekends, call 434-924-0000, and ask for the Vascular Resident on call, for the following: *temperature > 100 deg F, for more than 24 hours, greater incisional redness, or increased drainage for 24 hours.*
- Bruising around the incisional site is normal. The bruise may change colors, and the bruise may last for several weeks.

Activity Restrictions:

- You may begin walking as soon as you get home. You should walk several times per day, and gradually increase the distance with each session.
- Your specific procedure will influence when you may resume driving and heavy lifting (more than 10 pounds). Based on your procedure and recovery, you will probably be able to start driving, begin moderate lifting (objects more than 10 pounds), and return to work in 4 to 6 week(s). Your Vascular Surgeon will want you to check with her/him before engaging in the above activities. These activity restrictions will be discussed with you directly at your follow up appointment with your vascular surgeon. (If you had an arteriogram, driving may resume in one week. If you had an aortic stent placed, then driving may resume in two weeks.)

Your Diet:

- Eat foods low in saturated fat. Use margarine instead of butter, drink 1% milk instead of whole milk, and eat more foods that are baked, not fried.
- Do not add salt to your diet, and avoid eating lots of food that have high salt (sodium) content, such as ham, bacon, potato chips, and processed meats.
- If you are a diabetic, you will also need to avoid concentrated sweets.

Smoking Cessation

- If you are still smoking, you should stop. This is not easy. There are many strategies to help you stop. Keep a diary (journal) every day of your progress with smoking cessation. If you have specific questions on smoking cessation, call your Vascular Surgeon's office (weekdays).

Pain Control

- Your doctor has prescribed medications for your pain. Take your pain medications when your incisional pain begins to increase. After one to two weeks, acetaminophen or ibuprofen (non-narcotics) may be enough to control your pain. If your incisional pain becomes worse, despite the pain medication, call your Vascular Surgeon's office. (after 4:30 and on weekends, call 434-924-0000) and ask for the Vascular Resident on call

Follow Up

- Call your Primary Care Physician for an appointment in 1 – 2 weeks.
- Your Vascular Surgeon's office will send you a follow-up appointment in the mail. Any follow-up diagnostic tests will also be included in your appointment letter.
- For any medical emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest Emergency Dept.