



Discharge Instructions for Bowel Resection

Bowel resection is surgery to remove all or parts of the small or large intestine (bowel). This is done to treat conditions such as intestinal bleeding, blockages, inflammation or infections. It may also be done to remove large polyps (growths) or early signs of tumors in the intestines. In a bowel resection, your health care provider makes an incision in the abdomen. The amount of intestine removed depends on the reason why the surgery is needed.

After Surgery

You will likely stay in the hospital for one or more nights. Once you return home, follow the instructions below and any others that are given.

Activity after surgery

- After surgery, take it easy for the rest of the day. Don't use machinery or power tools, drink alcohol or make any major decisions for at least the first 24 hours.
- Don't drive while you are still taking opioid pain medicine, and don't drive until you are able to step firmly on the brake pedal without hesitation.
- Ask others to help with chores and errands while you recover.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds until your health care provider says it's ok.
- Don't mow the lawn, use a vacuum cleaner or do other strenuous activities until your health care provider says it's ok.
- Walk as often as you feel able.
- Continue the cough and deep breathing exercises that you learned in the hospital.
- Ask your health care provider when you can expect to return to work.
- Avoid constipation:
 - Eat foods that are soft and easy to chew
 - Drink six to eight glasses of water a day, unless otherwise instructed
 - Use a laxative or mild stool softener as instructed by your health care provider

Bandage and incision care

- Do not get the bandage or wound wet for 24 hours.
- If strips of tape were used to close your incision, don't pull them off. Let them fall off on their own.
- Remove any gauze bandage in 48 hours.
- Leave tape on for two weeks.
- Staples will be removed at your follow up appointment.
- Wash your incision with mild soap and water. Pat it dry. Don't use oils, powders or lotions on your incision. Do not soak your incision or take tub baths until cleared by your health care provider.

Follow-up care

Keep follow-up appointments during your recovery. These allow your health care provider to check your progress and make sure that you are healing well. You may also need to have your stitches, staples or bandage removed. During office visits, tell your health care provider if you have any new symptoms. And you sure to ask any questions you might have.



When to call your health care provider

Call your health care provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Chest pain or trouble breathing (Call 911)
- Reflux symptoms that continue or return
- A large amount of abdominal swelling or pain, especially pain after coughing
- Bleeding
- Belly that becomes tender or feels hard
- Increased redness or drainage of the incision
- Fever of 100.4 or higher, or as advised by your health care provider
- Inability to drink or eat
- Bowel movements that are black or bloody
- Pain or tenderness in your legs