DR KAREEM MARWAN FRACS
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# Post operative instructions: Anorectal Surgery

Most anorectal surgical procedures are done as same-day surgery. A few, more extensive procedures require hopitalization for one to three days. Your ability to tolerate the pain postoperatively and your doctor's concern about your wounds determine the time of discharge.

## After Discharge

**Medications** you will take home:

1. A prescription for pain medication with instructions. If you need additional medication, call your our office during normal business hours.
2. Bulk-forming stool softeners (such as Metamucil®), if recommended are to be taken in a glass of water once in the morning with increased water throughout the day.
3. Laxatives such as Movicol® may be prescribed. This can be purchased over the counter and are not to be used longterm.
4. **In case of anal fissure surgery***, special rectal ointments (such as Diltiazem or Rectogesic®) maybe prescribed. Dr Marwan will advise you on how and when to apply this*.

**Bowel Functions:** Bowel movements after anorectal surgery are usually associated with moderate to severe discomfort. Constipation and diarrhea make the pain much worse and must be avoided. The trauma to the anal wounds caused by hard bowel movements will slow down the healing process.

**Constipation:** You should be sure to have a bowel movement at least every other day. If two days pass without one, use the prescribed laxative. In select cases, an over-the-counter phosphate enema (Fleet®) or tap water enema may be used. Consult Dr Marwan prior to doing that.

**Diarrhea:** is usually caused by overuse of laxatives, is also a concern if you have more than three watery bowel movements during a 24-hour period. If diarrhea occurs, stop all laxatives. If diarrhea persists, call your office.

**Bathing:** After bowel movements, use a wet washcloth, toilet paper or cotton to clean yourself. If possible, take a Sitz bath or tub bath immediately. Baths should last 10-15 minutes with the water as warm as you can comfortably tolerate. Try to take at least three baths (or showers with hand-held sprayer) every day.

**Discharge/Infection:** Some bloody discharge after bowel movements is normal for at least two to four weeks after rectal surgery. If you have profuse, continuous

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bleeding, present to your nearest Emergency Department immediately. Post-operative infection around the rectal opening is surprisingly uncommon despite the obvious contamination by stool. This is probably because of the excellent blood supply to the area.

**Urination:** If you have trouble urinating, do so while sitting in a tub of water, or run the water faucet while sitting on the toilet. If the problem is severe or persistent, you may need medications to help.

**Diet:** Eat a high-fiber general diet, including plenty of fruits and vegetables. Try to drink at least six to eight glasses of water or juice per day to help keep the stool soft.

**Activity:** Upon discharge, there are generally no restrictions on walking, climbing stairs or riding in a car. After some procedures, you will be asked to avoid strenuous activity or heavy lifting for 7 to 14 days. However, this varies depending on your procedure. Discuss this with Dr Marwan.

## Cause For Concern

If any of the following occur, please call our office:

- Problems with the incision, including increasing pain, swelling, redness or drainage.
- Severe constipation (no bowel movement for three days).
- Diarrhea (more than three watery stools within 24 hours).
- Difficulty urinating.
- Fever greater than 38 degrees.
- Severe bleeding (amount more than a cup full, lots of clots, frequent episodes or if you feel faint because of it)
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Chills.

If Dr Marwan is not available or you cannot reach our office (afterhours/public holidays), **please present to the Emergency department without delay**.

## Follow up

is usually 6 weeks after surgery, you will be advised by our office.

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## Commonly Asked Questions

**Q: How soon can I drive?**
A: You can drive when you are comfortable enough to do so and are no longer taking pain medication.
**Q: When can I go back to work?**
A: Return to work varies depending on your procedure. Discuss this with Dr Marwan.
**Q: What will I have to do at home?**
A: You will be able to care for yourself, but you may need some assistance with cooking, housekeeping and grocery shopping.
**Q: Do I need someone to stay with me at home?**
A: It would be preferable to have someone stay with you.
**Q: When can I have sex?**
A: This varies depending on your procedure. Discuss this with Dr Marwan.

* **If you are prescribed Diltiazem 4% rectal ointment, a 10-15mm strip expressed on your index finger is to be applied just inside the anus (spread circumferentially) twice daily for 6 weeks in total, starting the day after your procedure. This is a medication which needs to be compounded (available at compounding Pharmacies) so sometimes you need to allow 2-3 days for the pharmacist to have it ready for you.**

Do not hesitate to call our office if you're unsure about these instructions or if you think you are not progressing as expected. If you have a few queries, it is sometimes easier to drop us an email on info@kmsurgical.com.au