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Surgeons of Northern Illinois

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LAPAROSCOPIC COLECTOMY (LAP COLON) POST -OP INSTRUCTIONS

1. Take your prescribed pain medicine if needed as directed. This is not a contest to see who can put up with the most pain. I would rather see you take the medicine and be up and about, than see you prove how tough you are but not be able to move. Because less muscles are cut and only small incisions are made, you are likely to experience less postoperative pain than from open surgery, but it may still hurt.
2. There will probably be some staples or small "steri-strips" bandages on your skin. Leave the steri-strips alone until they start to come off which will usually be in 5-7 days. The staples will be removed at your post-op visit. There is usually no need to apply further bandages. You may keep a light dressing on the wound if it pads the area and keeps your clothing from rubbing on the wounds. You may shower the day of discharge unless instructed otherwise.
3. You may expect some bruising. This can occasionally be spectacular. This looks terrible but will fade away over several days to weeks. There will be no permanent problem from the bruise.
4. Try to be as active as possible, but don't do any heavy lifting or vigorous exercising for six weeks. You may go up and down stairs. **DO NOT DRIVE** until you are off prescription pain pills and able to perform emergency maneuvers without thinking twice.
5. Eat a normal diet, foods that are easy for you to tolerate and digest.
6. It may take a number of weeks and sometimes longer for your bowel habits to become normal again. During this period of adjustment we would prefer that you let nature take its course. It is normal to have loose stools after colon surgery and attempts to reverse this may lead to the opposite extreme which can be more harmful to your surgical anastomosis (the hookup in the colon). If you are not passing gas or are having problems with your bowel movements (either too much or too little) do not hesitate to contact us.
7. Call the office the day you are discharged to set up a follow-up appointment for about one week after your surgery.
8. **DON'T HESITATE TO CALL US IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS.**