

# POSTOPERATIVE CARE – OUTPATIENT SURGERY

## YOUR FIRST 48 HOURS

- **VERY IMPORTANT:** If you have excessive bleeding or pain, call the office at (210)496-2639, anytime day or night.
- **YOUR FIRST 24 HOURS:** If you are going home, a family member or friend (a responsible adult) must drive you because you have been sedated. Someone has to stay overnight with you. If you choose to go to a postoperative center, they will provide transportation. If you have any questions about these matters, please ask one of our staff.
- **DRESSINGS:** *Keep your dressings as clean and dry as possible. Do not remove them unless instructed to do so.*
- **ACTIVITY:** Take it easy and pamper yourself. Try to avoid any straining. You may go to the bathroom, sit and watch TV, etc., but **NO MATTER HOW GOOD YOU FEEL, DO NOT CLEAN THE HOUSE, REARRANGE THE ATTIC, ETC.!** We do not want you to bleed and cause any more swelling and bruising that is unavoidable.
- **ICE PACKS:** **DO NOT USE ICE PACKS.** The surgical site may be numb and you may burn yourself by accident.
- **DIET:** If you have any postoperative nausea, carbonated sodas and dry crackers may settle the stomach. If nausea is severe, use the suppository. If you feel normal, start with liquids and bland foods, and if those are well tolerated, progress to a regular diet.
- **SMOKING:** Smoking reduces the capillary flow in your skin. We advise you not to smoke at all during the first 6 weeks after surgery.
- **ALCOHOL:** Alcohol dilates the blood vessels and could increase postoperative bleeding. Please do not drink until you have stopped taking the prescription pills, as the combination of the pain pills and alcohol can be dangerous.
- **DRIVING:** Please don't drive for at least 10 days after general anesthesia or intravenous sedation or while taking prescription pain pills. Please wait until you are cleared for driving by Dr. Lawton and staff.
- **POST OPERATIVE APPOINTMENTS:** It is VERY important that you follow the schedule of appointments we establish after surgery.

## **LONGER TERM POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTION**

- **ACTIVITY/SPORTS:** We want you to avoid straining or any aerobic activity for at least 3 weeks after surgery. This is to avoid bleeding, bruising, and swelling. Do not resume strenuous exercise for 6 weeks. Your doctor will give you clearance to increase your activities according to the progress of your recovery.

- **DRIVING:** You may resume driving when you are cleared by Dr. Lawton and staff to do so. Keep in mind that you must have full use of your reflexes. If pain will inhibit them, don't drive.
  
- **SEXUAL ACTIVITY:** You should not have sexual activity for at least 4-6 weeks following surgery. Please read Activity/Sports above and apply the same concept to sex.
  
- **SUN EXPOSURE:** If fresh scars are exposed to the sun, they will tend to become darker and take longer to fade. Sunscreen can help. Take extra care and precautions if the area operated on is slightly numb—you might not "feel" a sunburn developing!
  
- **WORK:** Follow whatever plan you and your doctor have agreed upon.