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Recovery/Post-operative Instructions  
**Skin Cancer**

**If you smoke or vape, consider quitting to support wound healing and recovery.**

**DIET & BOWEL CARE**

Resume bland, non-greasy, non-spicy foods in small portions the day of surgery. Drink plenty of fluids (water, juice, broth, sports drinks). To prevent constipation, start Colace (Docusate Sodium) 100mg twice daily the day before surgery; stop after your first bowel movement. **TAKE WITH 12 OZ COLD WATER** If no bowel movement in 2–3 days, use a Fleet Enema. **NO STIMULANT LAXATIVES**

**MEDICATIONS**

Pain: You'll receive a prescription for narcotics (e.g., Percocet, Oxycodone, Ultram, Vicodin, Tylenol with Codeine) and an anti-nausea medication. Take as prescribed.

- *Do not drive or drink alcohol while on narcotics.*
- Take with food to reduce nausea. Itching without rash is common—Benadryl may help.  
Regular Meds: Resume the evening of surgery or the next morning unless instructed otherwise. Complete any prescribed antibiotics.

**WOUND CARE**

Complex Closures: No showering for 48 hrs.

Skin Grafts/Integra: Do not remove dressing or shower until instructed.

General: No soaking in a tub/pool for 2 weeks (complex closures).

- Steri-strips: Leave on until they fall off
- Skin glue: Do not scrub—wears off in ~1 week
- Drains (e.g., lymph nodes): Follow specific care instructions
- Ice: Use over incisions (not skin grafts) for 48 hrs, 10 min on/off while awake

**Some bruising and soreness are expected.**

**ACTIVITY**

Walk around your house several times daily to prevent complications. Gradually increase activity as tolerated.

- No lifting/pushing/pulling >10 lbs or straining abdominal muscles
- No aerobic activity or sexual activity until cleared at follow-up
- You may return to work/school when you feel ready, with restrictions
- No driving for minimum of 72 hrs post-op or while taking narcotics

**CALL 561.333.1335 IF YOU EXPERIENCE:** (After hours/weekends, the on-call doctor will respond)

- Fever >101.5°F
- Chest pain or difficulty breathing
- Redness >¼", pus, bleeding, or drainage at wound/IV sites
- Increasing incision pain or abdominal swelling/pain
- Vomiting or trouble urinating (may require ER visit)
- Any other concerns about your recovery

**FOLLOW-UP**

Call the office 2–3 days after surgery to schedule your follow-up visit for 1–2 weeks post-op.