

Hemorrhoid Removal

How to prepare and what to expect

This handout explains what to expect when having surgery to remove hemorrhoids. It includes how to prepare for your operation, and how to plan for your recovery.

What is a hemorrhoid?

A *hemorrhoid* is a swollen vein or group of veins in the area of the anus. Surgery to remove hemorrhoids is called a *hemorrhoidectomy*.

How to Prepare

- Read the handout on hemorrhoids that your nurse or doctor gave you. Ask any questions that you may have.
- **Shaving:** Do **not** shave any part of your body that you do not already shave every day. If you normally shave near your surgical site, do **not** shave that area for 2 days (48 hours) before your surgery.
- **Aspirin and other medicines:** Do **not** take aspirin or any other products that affect blood clotting for 1 week before your operation. Two of these are ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn). See the attached sheet for more information.
- **Going home:** You **cannot** drive yourself or ride alone in a taxi or bus when you go home from the hospital. Make plans for a responsible adult to drive you home or ride home with you and stay with you the first night.



Drink plenty of fluids both before and after surgery.

Day Before Surgery

- **Arrival time:** An OR (operating room) scheduler will call you by 5 p.m. the night before your operation and tell you when to come to the hospital.
 - If you are having surgery on a Monday, the scheduler will call you the Friday before.
 - If you do not hear from the scheduler by 5 p.m., call 206.598.6541.
- **Diet:** The day before your surgery, **you may have only clear liquids** (liquids that you can see through). Some of these are Jell-O, apple juice, coffee and tea without milk, and broth.
- **Bowel preparation:** Follow the steps your nurse gave you for your bowel prep. You may do this bowel prep the night before or the morning of your surgery, or both. This will clean out your intestines so the doctors can do your surgery.
- **Shower:** Take a shower the night before your surgery. Use the antibacterial soap your nurse gave you to wash your body.
 - Do **not** use the antibacterial soap on your face, hair, or private parts. Use your own soap and shampoo on these areas. (See directions that came with the soap.)
 - Use clean towels to dry off, and put on clean clothing.

Surgery Day

At Home

- **Shower:** Take a shower in the morning of your surgery. Follow the same instructions as you did for your shower the night before surgery.

At the Hospital

- **Heating blanket:** To reduce your risk of infection, we will cover you with a heating blanket while you wait to go into the operating room. This will warm your body and help prevent infection.

After Surgery

Most people go home the day of surgery. All incisions will be inside your body, so there is no need for incision care.

For Your Safety

Medicine given during and after your surgery will affect you. For 24 hours after your surgery, do **not**:

- Drive
- Drink alcohol

- Use any machinery
- Travel alone
- Sign any legal papers
- Be responsible for the care of another person

Medicines

- Take your pain medicine as prescribed.
- **Take your laxatives as instructed.** It is very important that you do not get constipated.
- You can take your regular medicines, except for aspirin or other products that affect blood clotting.
- You can start taking aspirin or other products that affect blood clotting 1 week after surgery (see attached sheet).

Sitting

When you sit, use your donut pillow to ease pressure on your rectum.

Bowel Movements

Your first bowel movement after surgery will be very painful. Try sitting in a bathtub of warm water before having your first bowel movement. This will help relax your rectal muscles and ease the pain.

Rectal Bleeding

After surgery, it is normal to have blood on your toilet paper when you wipe your bottom. Your first bowel movement may cause some irritation or bleeding. This is to be expected. This area will heal over time.

Diet

- It is very important to drink lots of fluids after surgery to keep your stools soft. Drink 6 to 8 glasses (8 ounces each) of water every day. This is in addition to other liquids you drink during the day and at meals.
- Start eating a regular diet as soon as you can handle it.
- Eat foods that are high in fiber. Fiber content is given on the Nutrition Facts label.
 - The best source of fiber is breakfast cereal with 8 grams or more fiber per serving. Some examples are All Bran, Kashi Good Friends, and Fiber One.
 - If needed, take a fiber supplement. You can buy this product at your local drugstore without a prescription.

When to Call

Call the Nurse Advice Line at 206.598.4477 or your doctor if you have:

- Ongoing bleeding from your rectum
- Problems urinating (peeing)
- Rectal pain that is not eased by your pain medicine
- A fever higher than 100.5°F (38°C)
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Any concerns that cannot wait until your follow-up visit

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., call the Surgical Specialties Nurse Advice Line at 206.598.4477.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the resident on call for Surgery.

Or, ask to page your surgeon:

Dr. _____