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Robotic-assisted Laparoscopic Partial Nephrectomy (RALPN)

Postoperative Instructions

DIET:

The day after your surgery you will begin clear liquids and your diet will be advanced slowly. Upon discharge from the hospital, you can resume a regular diet. Many patients find that carbonated, caffeinated or alcoholic beverages and spicy foods can be bothersome in the first week after surgery. Eat plenty of fiber-rich foods for the first 1-2 weeks. Alcoholic beverages are best avoided in the first 24 hours and while taking any narcotic pain medications. It is important to drink plenty of water (6-8 glasses daily) after your kidney surgery to stay well hydrated and avoid constipation.

ACTIVITY:

When you leave the hospital you can (and should) walk daily and can go up and down stairs as needed. It is important to move around regularly and avoid sitting on the couch or lying in bed all day! You should avoid strenuous activity and/or exercise for several weeks after your surgery. This includes avoiding golfing, tennis, and jogging, working out/stretching activities, lawn work such as mowing, raking, shoveling, sexual activity, and lifting more than 15 lbs. You may shower two days after your surgery but should not soak in a bath, hot tub, or swimming pool for at least 2-3 weeks. Discuss any specific work- or activity-related concerns you have with your urologist.

MEDICATIONS:

You will be prescribed a narcotic pain medication-take this as needed per the instructions. Note that these medications can cause upset stomach and be constipating. If this is too strong or you do not tolerate this, try taking acetaminophen/Tylenol (over-the-counter) as needed for pain. It is best to avoid medications such as Advil, Motrin, ibuprofen, naproxen, etc. after your kidney surgery as this can hurt your remaining kidney function.

It is important that if you take a daily blood-thinning/anti-platelet medication (Coumadin/warfarin, aspirin, Advil/Motrin, Lovenox, Pradaxa, Eliquis, Xeralto, Plavix, etc.) that you only restart this as instructed by your physicians.

BOWELS:

It is important to avoid constipation as you recover from your robotic-assisted laparoscopic partial nephrectomy. Drink plenty of fluids (especially water). Narcotic pain medication can be constipating and it is important to take an over-the-counter stool softener/laxative to help prevent constipation (Miralax, milk of magnesia, Colace, etc.).

DRESSINGS:

After 2 days your incisions should be left uncovered to heal. You can cover them as needed if they continue to spot blood or clear fluid (this can be normal). If your incisions were closed with staples, these will be removed at your postoperative appointment.

DRAIN:

It is common after surgery to have a soft rubber tube leading to a flexible bulb (Jackson Pratt or “JP” tube). This goes into your abdomen to drain excess fluid from the surgery site and is typically removed prior to your discharge. In some cases, you will be sent home with it for a short time. If that is the case, you will measure and record the amount of output every 8 hours (the nursing staff will review this with you prior to your discharge).

EXPECTED SYMPTOMS:

It is normal to have some abdominal pain and bloating for the first week after your surgery. You may be sore around the incisions. Your incisions may spot blood or clear fluid for several days. Contact us immediately for worsening/severe abdominal pain, fevers and/or chills, cloudy pus-like drainage from your incisions, worsening blood seen in the urine, trouble breathing or pain in your chest, or swelling in your legs.

FOLLOWUP APPOINTMENT:

Our office will contact you to schedule your follow-up appointment. This will typically be in 1 week.

PATHOLOGY RESULTS:

Your pathology results will be reviewed with you at your follow-up appointment with your urologist. These will not be given out over the phone.