

Care Following Incision & Drainage

SWELLING:

It is normal for your swelling to increase after surgery. **Very Important:** An electric (**moist**) heating pad (on medium heat setting) applied over the area of your infection will speed your recovery. Elevate your head with extra pillows for the first 3 days after surgery. This will help reduce your swelling.

Pain:

It is normal to experience some discomfort after surgery. Pain medications will be given to you to control and lessen your pain. However, no medication will alleviate all of your discomfort. Some of the medications given and prescribed will cause drowsiness. **Do not drive or operate machinery** after your surgery or after taking your prescribed pain medications, because they will slow your responses. If you were given Ibuprofen, start this medication **before** the numbness wears off. You can start the other pain medication when the numbness starts to wear off.

Oral Hygiene:

Brush your teeth after each meal, before going to bed and when you get up in the morning. **Very Important:** Rinse with a dilute hydrogen peroxide solution (½ water and ½ hydrogen peroxide mix) after each time you brush and **at least 6 times each day**, for 60 seconds each time.

External Drain:

If you have an external drain, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you follow these instructions.

- Keep the base (closest to your skin) of the drain moist by placing gauze wet with Normal Saline and wrapping it around the bottom of the drain (closest to you your skin).
- Wrap dry gauze around the wet one and tape LOOSELY in place.
- Change the dressing every 4 hours.

Diet:

For 24 hours after surgery, it is best to take only clear liquids (liquids you can read print through, like apple or cranberry juice or Jell-O). Drink plenty of liquids (at least 10 full glasses a day). After the first 24 hours, you may be more comfortable if you eat a soft diet for a few days before resuming a normal diet when you can chew comfortably. Do not eat hard foods like chips for 4 weeks. Do not drink alcoholic beverages for at least 1 week. A daily multivitamin with zinc (like "Centrum") would be helpful to supplement your diet for several weeks during your healing.

Smoking:

Do not smoke. Smoking will increase the risk of complications.

We strongly encourage that a responsible adult be with you for the first 24 hours after surgery. You may resume your normal activities the day after your procedure. Base your activities on how you feel.

If questions arise, call Dr. Snyder at (704) 865-0081. If you have prolonged/severe bleeding, swelling or pain, call Dr. Snyder immediately. Dr. Snyder has an answering service that can reach him when the office is closed.