

Post Operative Information

We thank you for choosing us as your surgeons to provide your care. After surgery, you may have questions regarding what is expected and normal. The following is a list of frequently asked questions which will better prepare you for what to expect post operatively.

1. Will I have pain after surgery? After surgery, it is common to have discomfort at the sites of surgery. Regardless of the size of your incision you should still expect to have some pain in these areas. Your doctor will prescribe pain medication for you, take this as prescribed. If you begin to have pain that is uncontrolled by your medication, contact our office immediately.
2. I haven't been able to have a bowel movement, is this normal? Depending on the type of surgery you have, you can expect to have some delay in bowel movements. If general anesthesia was used during your surgery, it can take a few days for your bowels to begin to move normally. Early and frequent ambulation can help. After surgery if you are prescribed pain medications, it is very important to also take a stool softener because pain medication itself can cause constipation. If you have had no bowel movement after 3 days, please contact our office. Special exceptions are for colon surgery, patients may expect to have no bowel movement for up to 5 days.
3. What should my incision look like? Incisions can vary in length and number depending on the type of surgery you had. There are also different methods for closing incisions including sutures, staples and skin glue. Some patients can have reactions to the glue or tape used after surgery. This usually looks like redness but only in the area where the glue/tape touched the skin. If you have redness outside of these areas or redness that is spreading, or if you notice any drainage from your incision that is creamy yellow/green/white or foul smelling, please contact our office.
4. When can I drive after surgery? If you are taking pain medications you **SHOULD NOT** drive. After surgery you should schedule an appointment with the medical assistants or your physician, at that time you will be assessed for driving ability.
5. When should I follow up after surgery? You should schedule an appointment to see the medical assistants or physician, generally 7-10 days after surgery if your incisions were closed with skin glue and 10-14 days after surgery if your incisions were closed with staples. Please contact our office to schedule this.
6. Can I shower after surgery? If your incision was closed with skin glue, you may shower after 48 hours. Sutures and staples should remain dry until removal by your physician.
7. What situations should I be concerned about? Contact our office if you have pain uncontrolled by medication, fever/chills/nausea/vomiting, or red/draining incisions or wounds. Call 911 if your pain is **SUDDENLY SEVERE OR INCAPACITATING** or if you become short of breath. This is not normal after surgery and will require evaluation in person by a doctor in the ER.

Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact our office during normal business hours from 8:30am-5pm at (949)457-7900. Should you have an emergency outside of these hours, an on call doctor is available. We thank you again for choosing South Orange County Surgical Medical Group and we look forward to providing you with continued outstanding care.