



Going Home after your Prostate Surgery

UHN

This booklet has information to help you when you are ready to go home after your prostate surgery.

Caring for your incision (cut)

- You may shower while the clips are in place. Use a mild soap, then pat the area around the incision with a dry towel.
- Do not put any creams, lotions or powder on your incision.
- A nurse from Community Care Access Centre (home care) will remove staples, if you have them, as ordered by your Doctor.
(We will give you a staple remover before you leave the hospital).
- Call the nursing floor/unit 6A West if you notice these symptoms:
 - redness or swelling around the incision more than before
 - tenderness around the incision more than before
 - leaking from the incision
 - incision starts to separate

Caring for your Foley Catheter

- You may shower with the foley catheter in place. Use a mild soap to clean off any discharge. Pat the area dry with a dry towel. Put Polysporin[®] on the area where the catheter enters the penis.

How often should I wash the area?

- Catheter care should be done 2 to 3 times a day and as needed. You may use a baby wet wipe to clean the area instead of soap and water during the day if it's easier. You can buy these at any drug store or supermarket.

Please visit the UHN Patient Education website for more health information: www.uhnpatienteducation.ca

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Changing your Leg Bag

- During the day it is important to wear the leg bag, as this is a smaller bag and can be worn under pants.
- During the night it is important to change to the larger bag. This bag makes sure urine flows away from the bladder. It can be left on the floor next to your bed.
- When changing from one bag to another it is important to clean the bag that is not being used. A few drops of liquid soap and warm water should be used to clean the bag. Vinegar may also be used. Allow it to drip dry.

What you should know about your catheter

- The catheter should be securely taped to the upper part of your thigh because it reduces pulling on the catheter, which may cause some bleeding.
- It is important to call the Doctor if the catheter comes out. A visiting nurse should not try to reinsert the catheter.
- The urine should be clear. Not drinking enough fluid will darken the colour of your urine.
- The colour of your urine may change from clear yellowish-brown to dark burgundy. This is normal as there are usually old clots at the bottom of the bladder. When you move around, these clots stir and cause the urine to change colour.
- Spasms may irritate and cause some bleeding.
- **NO** Kegel exercises while the catheter is in place. The exercises will bring on spasms and cause bleeding.
- If urine becomes bright red, drink more fluids and rest for short periods. Urine may become more red if you strain when you have a bowel movement.
- It is normal to have urine leak around the catheter. This is caused by bladder spasms. This may also happen when you are having a bowel movement.
- It is common to pass old clots from around the catheter. These are usually too large to fit through the catheter.
- It is important to stop taking any bladder spasm medication such as Ditropan or O&B suppositories, 24 hours before your catheter comes out.

Call the **nursing unit** or go to your emergency department if the bleeding (bright red blood) does not decrease when you drink more fluid and rest.

Call the **nursing unit** if you are having chills and a fever greater than 38° C.



Scrotum and penis

Your penis and scrotum may appear bruised and/or swollen for a few weeks after the surgery. We recommend that you wear brief underwear (not boxers) to help support your scrotum and to decrease the bruising and swelling.

Going back to your normal activities

Listen to your body!

- For the first few weeks after surgery, avoid strenuous exercise and heavy lifting (nothing over 10 lbs / 5kg or the size of a bag of flour)
- You may take slow walks or use a treadmill, on low incline and slow speed.
- Avoid long car drives and make frequent stops to walk and stretch your legs.
- Avoid driving a car for few weeks after surgery.
- You may do your regular exercise again 6 weeks after surgery. It may take time to build up your strength, and you may tire easily. Listen to your body and rest as needed.

A few weeks after your surgery

- You may feel discomfort in the perineal area (the skin between the genitals and the anus), and/or near your rectum a few weeks after surgery. This is part of the healing process and will decrease over time. Many men may find it uncomfortable to sit for long periods of time.
- You may start manually stimulating the penis after the catheter comes out. Most men find that when sexually aroused they will have an orgasm even though they do not achieve an erection.
- Medication for erections are usually started at 7 weeks with your follow up appointment.
- Orgasms will be dry. Some men may find they leak urine during orgasm, but this usually decreases over time.
- Medications are available to strengthen erections. Talk to your surgeon during your follow up visit about what is right for you.
- If you are sexually active, we will give you an appointment in the penile rehabilitation clinic about 3 months after surgery .

What to eat

- You may eat what you normally do once you are home. A large meal may not settle well with your stomach. Try smaller, more frequent meals.
- Constipation is normal after abdominal surgery. Drinking more fluids and eating more bran and fibre such as fruits and vegetables will help in the first few weeks after surgery.
- A Healthy Prostate Diet (The recommendations in this brochure are part of a Healthy Prostate Diet)
- A low fat diet such as the Healthy Heart Diet
- Although your body needs some fat to work properly and absorb nutrients, there is a link between eating more dietary fat and the risk of developing prostate cancer.
- Avoid or decrease the amount of fast food, fried foods, gravy, creams, and excess of cheese, chocolate, nuts, etc.
- It may take a lot of work at first to keep on the low fat plan, but as you follow the diet, low fat food choices become easier.

If you take any of the supplements listed below, DO NOT have more than the recommended dose.

40 grams of soy daily

- Getting enough protein is very important, yet animal protein is high in fat. Soy is a plant protein low in fat. Of all plant proteins, soy is the most complete, offering a full range of essential amino acids and "cancer fighting" isoflavones.
- Forms of soy protein are Tofu, Soymilk, Tempeh, Soy powder.
- If you don't like soy, or it's a difficult change to make, you may consider soy supplements.
- Adding soy to your diet may cause you to gain weight if you add it to your regular eating habits.
- Men on protein restricted diets for medical reasons should talk to their Doctor or dietitian before adding soy to their diet.

200ug of Selenium daily

- Selenium is an antioxidant that is usually found in soil.
- Selenium is almost impossible to get from food, so you can buy a supplement from a pharmacy or health food store. It has been



suggested that in countries with low selenium levels such as Canada and United States, cancer rates are higher. This includes prostate cancer.

- DO NOT take more than the recommended dose because this may cause other health problems.

30 mg of Lycopenes

- Lycopenes is an antioxidant.
- Lycopenes is found in tomatoes, papaya, and watermelon.
- Studies suggest men who eat more than 10 servings a week of cooked tomatoes have a one third reduction in prostate cancer.
- When it comes to lycopenes cooked is better than raw.

400 IU of Vitamin D

- Health Canada recommends a daily Vitamin D supplement containing 400IU for men and women over 50 years of age
- Vitamin D is found in sunlight and in fish such as Atlantic herring, sockeye salmon, Greenland halibut, catfish, tuna, Atlantic cod and Pacific sardines

Green Tea

- Green Tea is a powerful antioxidant that may help to slow down tumor growth. It is a favourite in many Asian countries where men have lower rates of prostate cancer.
- Recommend 5 to 10 cups a day. It may also be taken in pill form.

Have less than 10 mg Zinc

- Zinc is a mineral that has many helpful qualities. It helps our body to repair wounds.
- Daily requirements are very low and easily maintained by eating a well balanced diet.
- Zinc is found mostly in meat poultry, eggs, liver and seafood in particular oysters and crab.
- It is also found in tofu black-eyed peas and wheatgerm.

Excerpts taken from “Challenging Prostate Cancer, Nutrition, Exercise and You”, J Trachtenberg, Neil Fleshner, Kristen Currie, Daniel SantaMina, Andrew Matthew, Carol Lancaster RN, Barbie Casselman Paul Ritvo and Jane Irvine

A PDF file of this book is available through the PMH website or by visiting www.prostatecenter.ca



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