

## CRANIOTOMY Discharge Instructions

**Please Note:** These are guidelines and helpful suggestions for your postoperative recovery period. Everyone progresses at their own pace postoperatively.

- **Medications:**

1. Resume all previous medications unless instructed otherwise.
2. Take pain medication and anti-seizure medication as directed (if prescribed).
3. Wean off of narcotic-based pain medications as tolerated.
4. Refrain from taking aspirin, ibuprofen, naproxen, or similar medications for one month after surgery, or 3 months for subdural hematoma, unless otherwise directed.

- **Activities:**

1. For exercise during the first couple of weeks, go for short walks only. Do not exert yourself or work up a sweat. Avoid strenuous activities.
2. No lifting greater than 10 lbs. No strenuous activity.
3. You may feel fatigue for the first several weeks after surgery. This is normal. Taking frequent naps is recommended.
4. Do not drive until cleared by your doctor at your follow up appointment.
5. No flying for the first 4-6 weeks.
6. Elevate your head 30 degrees when resting or sleeping for the first week.
7. Your activity restrictions will be reviewed at your first postoperative visit in about 3 weeks.

- **Diet:**

1. Your appetite may be decreased. Eat smaller, more frequent meals.
2. Surgery and pain medication may cause constipation. If you need a laxative, try 1-2 teaspoons of Metamucil and/or a tablespoon of Milk of Magnesia in the evening before bed. Increase your water intake, eat fiber, fresh fruit and vegetables, or prunes.

- **Wound Care:**

1. If a dressing is placed, keep it on for 5 days and change for the amount of time as directed.
2. Keep the incision area clean and dry. Do not peel off the scabs.
3. Do not submerge the incision in water, e.g., bathtub, hot tub, or swimming pool, until after your wound is evaluated at your first postoperative office visit in 3 weeks.
4. Cover the incision in the shower with for one week postoperatively, Do not scrub your incision.
5. Do not apply any ointments to your incision unless otherwise directed.
6. There may be some numbness around the incision, which is normal and will improve.
7. Depending upon the location of your incision, you may develop a “black eye” or eye swelling.
8. Please call the office if you notice swelling, redness, heat or drainage around or from your incision, if your incision opens, or if you develop a fever  $>100.5$ .
9. You may wear a loose fitting hat to avoid extended sun exposure to your incision.

- **Special Instructions:**

1. Please call the office when you get home from the hospital to schedule a follow-up appointment at 503-546-3503.
2. Please call the office if you have any questions or concerns, or if an emergency arises.
3. Please contact your pharmacy for medication refills. Refills will only be done during normal business hour. Please give at least 48 hours notice for refill requests. Requests may be faxed to 503-546-3507.