



## **TRANSRECTUS ABDOMINAL MUSCLE (TRAM) FLAP**

### **DAY OF SURGERY**

**DAY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **THINGS TO EXPECT TODAY**

- You will be transferred from the Recovery Room to a room on one of the surgical units.
- The nurse will monitor your vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, respirations, temperature), check the dressing over your incision(s) and the flap for color and temperature.
- You will have a tube draining fluid from your incision site. The nurse will check the drain frequently, empty and measure the amount of fluid. The nurse will show you how to empty the drain.
- Your bed will be elevated so that the head is at a 45° angle and the knee gatch will be raised. This prevents pressure on the flap.
- You will receive pain medication, IV fluids and IV antibiotics.

#### **WHAT WE WILL HELP YOU DO TODAY**

- Use the Incentive Spirometer at least 10 times every hour you are awake. How high did you get the incentive spirometer this time? \_\_\_\_\_
- You will need to stay in bed.
- Ask your nurse about your pain management program. You will be asked to rate your pain before and after taking pain medication to make sure you are comfortable.

## DAY 1 – AFTER SURGERY

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### THINGS TO EXPECT

- You will be allowed clear liquids. The IV will be discontinued if you are taking adequate fluids. You will be given antibiotics intravenously.
- The nurse will check the drain, your arm on the operative side and the flap.
- You will be given your pain medication in IV form.

### THINGS WE WILL HELP YOU DO TODAY

Review your information packet. Read the section on While In the Hospital.

- When you are in bed, the head of the bed will be raised to a 45° angle and with the bed in the knee gatch position.
- You will be helped out of bed to the chair for 15-30 minutes. The nursing staff will help you the first few times.
- When out of bed, elevate your arm.
- Take your pain medication as needed to make you comfortable. Remember you will be asked to rate your pain before and after receiving medication.
- Do the coughing and deep breathing exercises and use the incentive spirometer. How high did you go? \_\_\_\_\_
- Ask to speak with a Social Worker if you have questions about your discharge.

## DAY 2

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### THINGS TO EXPECT

- You will be allowed your usual diet. The IV will be discontinued if you are taking adequate fluids. You will be given antibiotics orally.
- You will be given your pain medication and antibiotics in pill form.

### THINGS WE WILL HELP YOU DO TODAY

Review your information packet. Read the section Going Home. Find out when you need to return to the surgeon's office for a follow up visit.

- Sit out of bed on the chair. If needed, the nursing staff will help you the first few times. Gradually increase the amount of time you are up. Remember to walk in a slightly hunched position to prevent pulling of the flap.
- Remember when in bed, keep the head elevated to a 45° angle and the knee gatch raised.
- Take your pain medication as needed to make you comfortable. Remember you will be asked to rate your pain before and after receiving medication.
- Do the coughing and deep breathing exercises and use the incentive spirometer. How high did you go? \_\_\_\_\_
- Keep the affected arm elevated on a pillow while in bed or sitting in a chair. The angle should be less than 45° degrees.
- Ask to speak with a Social Worker if you have questions about your discharge.

## **DAY 3**

**DAY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **THINGS TO EXPECT**

- Remember when in bed, to keep the head elevated to a 45° and the knee gatch raised.
- You will be given your pain medication and antibiotics in pill form.
- The drain may be removed.

### **THINGS WE WILL HELP YOU DO TODAY**

Review your information packet. Read the section Going Home. Find out when you need to return to the surgeon's office for a follow-up visit.

- Sit out of bed on the chair. If needed, the nursing staff will help you the first few times. Gradually increase the amount of time you are up.
- You can walk in a hunched position. Your nurse will give you specific instructions.
- Take your pain medication as needed to make you comfortable. Remember you will be asked to rate your pain before and after receiving medication.
- Do the coughing and deep breathing exercises and use the incentive spirometer. How high did you go? \_\_\_\_\_
- Keep the affected arm elevated on a pillow while in bed or sitting in a chair. The angle should be less than 45° degrees.
- Ask to speak with a Social Worker if you have questions about your discharge.
- If possible, look at your incision so that you can report any changes such as redness, drainage or swelling to the surgeon.

## **EVENING**

- Remember to use the incentive spirometer and take a walk around the nursing unit.
- Write down any remaining questions you have. Confirm transportation home.
- The evening before discharge, have family take home some of your belongings.
- The nursing staff will be making evening and night rounds. If you need something, please let the staff know.

## **DAY 4 - DAY OF DISCHARGE**

**DAY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **THINGS TO EXPECT**

- Staff will review discharge instructions.
- You will receive any needed prescriptions.

### **THINGS TO DO TODAY**

- Wash up.
- Find out when you need to return for a follow-up visit with the surgeon.
- Review the discharge plan with the nurse and sign it. Ask any remaining questions.