

Notify the Doctor or Go to the Emergency Department if any of the following happens:

- Problems with the incision(s), including increasing pain, swelling, redness, or drainage
- Severe constipation
- Diarrhea (more than three watery stools within 24 hours)
- Difficulty urinating
- Fever greater than 38°C. or 100.4°F.
- Increasing or severe bleeding
- Nausea or vomiting
- Chills

After Anal/ Rectal Surgery

Discharge Instructions

For more copies, go online at <http://vch.eduhealth.ca> or email pchem@vch.ca and quote Catalogue No. **ED.150.An13**

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The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the health care team.

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Important Points

Activity

- Generally, there is no limit to your activities when you go home. Your surgeon may advise you to avoid heavy lifting (greater than 20 lbs) for about 10 days.

Baths/Showers

- You may shower and bathe as you like.
- To relieve pain and keep the area clean, sit in a bath of warm water (sometimes called a “sitz bath”) for about 10 - 15 minutes 3 - 4 times a day, **and** after each bowel movement.

Diet

- Remember that a well-balanced diet is important for wound healing.
- Include high fiber and plenty of fluids in your diet to **keep the stool soft**, especially if taking pain medicine:
 - 6 - 8 glasses of water daily
 - grain breads
 - bran cereals (All Bran, Bran Buds, Fruit & Fiber)
 - fruits (prunes, raisins, dates, bananas, apples)
 - vegetables

Bowel Function

- Bowel movements after anorectal surgery often cause moderate to severe discomfort. Constipation makes the pain worse and must be avoided. Hard bowel movements may cause trauma to the operative area and slow down healing. Avoid straining.
 - **To prevent constipation**, take a bulk-forming stool softener (for example, Metamucil® or Colace). Follow the diet directions as noted above under “Diet”.
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Urination

- If you have trouble urinating, do so while sitting in a warm tub of water, or run the water faucet while sitting on the toilet.

Infection/Dressings

- Some bloody discharge after bowel movements is normal for at least two to four weeks after anal/rectal surgery. If you have profuse, continuing bleeding, call your doctor immediately.
- Postoperative infection around the anal opening is **not** common despite the obvious soiling by stool.
- You can wear a dressing or sanitary napkin to protect your clothing.

Pain

- Use pain medication as ordered by your doctor. This medication may cause constipation.
- Do not drink alcohol when taking pain medication.

Follow-Up Appointment

- Contact your Doctor’s office to arrange for a follow-up appointment.
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