

Novant Health Hepatobiliary & Pancreas Specialists

After Your Surgery

Month #1

- + **You WILL lose some weight.** This is mostly fluid loss from surgery.
- + **It is common to feel full** after just one or two bites of solid food.
- + **Profound fatigue or depression** may develop. Talk to your doctor about counseling or medication.
- + **Falling asleep at night may be difficult.** Sleeping pills may not be helpful.
- + **Your bowels may be irregular.** You can go from loose stools to constipation or vice versa even if this is not normal for you.
- + **Some postop pain is normal for about 2-3 weeks after discharge.** Pain may become an issue again at about 6-8 weeks postop for a short time.

Exercise

Walking Prescription → Walking will improve your mental health by decreasing anxiety, improve your physical health by decreasing fatigue, and accelerate your recovery after surgery.

- + Allow time for rest
- + Walk with someone
- + If needed, take pain medication **BEFORE** you begin activity.
- + It's **NORMAL** to feel more tired than usual and more fatigued.

Month 1

- + Phase 1: Slow Walking Warm-up 5 minutes
- + Phase 2: Brisk Walking 10 minutes
- + Phase 3 Slow Walking Cool Down 5 minutes

Month 2

- + Phase 1: Slow Walking Warm-up 5 minutes
- + Phase 2: Brisk Walking 20 minutes
- + Phase 3 Slow Walking Cool Down 5 minutes

Month 3

- + Phase 1: Slow Walking Warm-up 5 minutes
- + Phase 2: Brisk Walking 30 minutes
- + Phase 3 Slow Walking Cool Down 5 minutes

Diet

- + Light, cool, or room temperature food in small amounts is easiest to digest for up to a month postop.
- + Frequent small snacks are often easier to tolerate than large meals.
- + Heavy, hot, smelly foods in large quantities can make you feel overfull and may make you sick to your stomach.
- + It's easy to get dehydrated, so drink lots of fluids (especially water or Gatorade®). Fruits like watermelon, grapes, kiwi, are cool, wet and light.
- + For something warm and comforting with great nutritional value, try soups.
- + Increase the amount and type of foods slowly. If you have problems with solids, back off and stick to liquids for a day or two, then begin again to slowly add solids. Start with soft foods, then progress to as much of your normal diet as possible. This process can take 6 weeks or longer.
- + Drink Boost®, Ensure®, or Carnation Instant Breakfast® for a few meal replacements if solids are difficult to tolerate. You can freeze it and it like ice cream.

Personal Care

- + You may shower
- + You may get your incision wet
- + Take Steri-Strips off after 7 days at home
- + Elevate your legs if sitting for more than 20 minutes

Medications

- + Pain relievers can cause constipation. Take over-the-counter stool softeners daily while taking pain medication to help with this.
- + Omeprazole taken daily protects your stomach and intestines from ulcers.
- + Pancreatic enzymes help digest fats in food. You may need 1-3 capsules with each meal and snack. Enzymes are generally not needed forever.

Activity

Resume normal activity as much as possible
EXCEPT:

- + No heavy lifting. Nothing greater than 10 pounds for 6 weeks postop.
- + No driving while taking pain medication. You can ride in the car.

Call 336-277-4050

if:

- + You have a fever higher than 101°
- + Your incision or drain sites are leaking
- + You cannot drink or eat without throwing up
- + You have diarrhea that does not improve in 3 days
- + You have any questions