

# Discharge Instructions for Hiatus Hernia Repair & Fundoplication

Dr Mark Gately & Dr Martin McLeod

## Medications

- You will be discharged with the following medications after surgery:
  - Lansoprazole (Zoton), an acid reducing (PPI) medication:  
Please take this for 6 weeks as prescribed so the stomach can heal in a less acidic environment.  
You should then be able to stop your PPI.
  - Ondansetron (Zofran), a medication to control nausea:  
Please take if feeling nauseated (4 wafers given for discharge).
  - Tapentadol (Palexia), a strong pain reliever:  
Please take if regular Panadol is not adequate for pain relief. YOU SHOULD NOT DRIVE whilst taking this medication.
- Please take regular paracetamol for 7 days after surgery. Take as a Liquid. DO NOT exceed the maximum daily dosage.
- Resume any medications you were on before surgery. Your surgeon will let you know if there are any medications to continue to withhold. This may include blood thinners eg aspirin, warfarin, Plavix etc.

## Pain

- It is common to get some abdominal and/or shoulder pain after laparoscopic (key-hole) surgery. This should mainly subside within 3 days of surgery.

- If the pain worsens or is accompanied by shortness of breath/chest pain, please contact Sea Change Weight Loss Clinic or present to your nearest emergency department.

## Wound Care

- You will leave hospital with dressings on your wounds. Please keep these dressings in-tact for 7 days after surgery.
- You can shower as usual with the dressings on, as they should be waterproof.
- If the dressings come away or get soaked through from the shower, simply replace them with a band-aid.
- After 7 days, dressings can be removed. You will see a healing wound. The stitches are beneath the skin and will dissolve and do not need to be removed.
- Contact our office if you have any concerns about your wounds ie: redness, pain, swelling or discharge.
- Note that it is normal to have some redness around wound sites as they heal.

## Diet & Nutrition

- You may have a slight sensation of food getting 'stuck' in your lower chest. This can be normal initially and last for up to 3 months. If the sensation is severe or you are unable to swallow your puree diet, please contact the rooms.
- Fundoplication can reduce your ability to burp and give you 'gas bloat'. Avoid fizzy drinks for 3 months.

- Some diarrhoea/change in bowel habit can occur after fundoplication. This can be discussed during your follow-up.
- You will be discharged on a puree diet for the first 4 weeks then move to a soft diet 2 weeks after. Slowly build up the consistency of food 6 weeks after surgery, with red meat and white bread as the last foods to try.
- If you have any questions regarding this, please contact Sea Change on 02 4037 5858.

## Bowel habit

- It is common to experience a change in bowel habit following this surgery, some patients may get constipation and need to take something for their bowels, often due to the pain medications used in hospital. Alternatively, some patients may experience loose motions following a fundoplication.
- If required, take Coloxyl and Senna or Lactulose for constipation, if this is a problem, both are available over the counter at local pharmacies.

## Activity

- No heavy lifting for 6 weeks following surgery. This is because the stitches repairing your diaphragm and forming your fundoplication can only take a few kilograms of pressure; anything beyond this increases the chances of the stitches failing and resulting in having a recurrence of hernia/failure of wrap. It takes about 6 weeks for your body to make new collagen that gives you long term strength to the repair.
- You may drive once you are off strong analgesia (Palexia) and can react in an emergency, usually 5 days.
- We would expect most patients will be back at work 2 weeks after surgery.
- You are free to walk immediately after surgery – start slowly and build up. Avoid

too much exercise on hot days and maintain hydration.

## Please contact us if you have concerns

- During business hours, **contact Sea Change on 02 4037 5858**. View our business hours here: [seachangeclinic.com.au/contact](http://seachangeclinic.com.au/contact)
- After hours, contact the ward from which you were discharged.

## *In Case of Emergency*

- Please present to an Emergency Department or dial **000** if you experience any of the following:
  - Chest Pain
  - Sudden shortness of breath
  - Fast heart rate – more than 120 beats per min
  - High Temperatures over 38°C
  - Severe Nausea and vomiting
  - Increasing abdominal pain
  - Increasing use of pain medications
  - Inability to swallow, or great difficulty swallowing.

## Follow-up appointments

- You should also have an appointment for follow-up with your Surgeon 6 weeks after the procedure.
- **Please contact Sea Change on 02 4037 5858 if you are unsure about the timing of these appointments.**