

**WellSpan Health- York Hospital**  
**Preparing for your Surgery**  
**Rapid Recovery after Colon Surgery**

Here is some information to help you know what to expect before, during and after your surgery. This information will explain how to improve your recovery after surgery and make your stay in the hospital shorter.

**Plans to Make before Surgery:**

You may need help with meals, laundry, bathing or cleaning after your surgery.

- Make plans with your family or friends so you will have help when you need it.

Your discharge to return home may be as soon as the third day after your surgery. Tell your nurse if you have worries about going home.

- Plan for someone to give you a ride home in the morning the day you are discharged from the hospital.

**The Day before Surgery:**

- Follow the Bowel Prep instructions you were given in your surgeon's office.
- Follow instructions for any special skin preparation you are to do.

**The Day before Surgery:** A Short Stay Surgery Unit nurse will call you the day before your surgery. The nurse will tell you about:

- What you may eat or drink
- When to stop eating
- What time to stop drinking liquids on the day of your surgery
- What medicines you can take on the day of surgery
- What medicines you should not take on the day of surgery
- What time to come to the hospital

**Things to Bring to the Hospital:**

1. All instructions you were given in the office.
2. Medicare and/or insurance cards.
3. Two packages of your favorite chewing gum
4. Personal hygiene items
5. Items that help you see, hear or move such as glasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, dentures, cane or walker. Label all storage containers or items with your name.

**\*\*\*Do not bring** anything valuable to the hospital such as jewelry, cell phone or electronic items. The hospital is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **The Day of Surgery:**

- You may not eat any food.
- You may continue to have clear liquids up to 2 hours before your scheduled surgery time.
- Report to the hospital at the time you were told to do so by the Short Stay Surgical Unit Nurse. You will be taken to the preop area to prepare you for surgery.

### **During Surgery:** You will be given:

1. Medicine to help prevent feeling sick to your stomach
2. Pain medicine to help keep your pain controlled
3. You will wake up in the PACU (Post Anesthesia Care Unit) after your surgery.  
The nurses will check you often and watch you closely until you are ready to go to your room.

### **After Surgery**

#### **Day of Surgery on the Surgical Unit:**

- You will be given pain medications to help control your pain. You will be asked to rate your pain on a scale from 1 -10. Tell the nurse if you have pain. The nurse will help you manage the pain with medicine, positioning or pillows to help keep you as comfortable as possible.
- You may start chewing gum when you return to your room as soon as you would like.
- You will be allowed to have clear liquids 2 hours after your surgery. Examples of clear liquids are jello, clear broths, tea, apple or cranberry juice. You may also be given a nutritional supplement if ordered by your surgeon.
- After surgery you will be helped to get out of bed by the nursing staff to walk. You may also sit in a chair after your walk.
- You will be shown by your nurse how to do deep breathing and coughing exercises on an incentive spirometer. These will help prevent pneumonia. Do the breathing exercises 10 times every hour.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Day after Surgery:**

- You may have clear liquids as you want for breakfast and lunch.
- As long as you are not nauseous or vomiting you will be able to eat regular food for dinner.
- You may also be given a nutritional supplement as ordered by your surgeon.
- Continue to chew gum as often as you like.
- You will be assisted out of bed as needed and walk 5 times throughout the day. You will also be encouraged to sit out of bed in a chair as much as possible.
- You will be asked about passing gas (flatus). Please tell your nurse the first time that you are able to pass gas (flatus).

### **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Day after Surgery:**

- As long as you are not nauseous or vomiting you will be able to continue to eat normal food for your meals.
- You may also be given a nutritional supplement as ordered by your surgeon.
- Continue to chew gum as often as you like.
- You will be encouraged to walk at least 5 times throughout the day and as often as you like.
- You will be asked about passing gas (flatus). Please tell your nurse the first time that you are able to pass gas (flatus).
- You will also be preparing to be discharged. Before you are discharged you will be eating and drinking without nausea or vomiting. You will be passing gas (flatus). You will have no temperature. You will have your pain under control using pain medication. You will be walking several times per day.

### **After You are Discharged:**

Follow the instructions you were given by your surgeon. Continue to do daily activities and walk at least 5 times per day.