**Discharge Instructions:  Abdominal Surgery**

* Avoid straining and lift nothing heavier than 15 pounds for 8 weeks after surgery.  A gentle, velcro abdominal binder may help with incisional pain.
* Walking and climbing stairs are encouraged.  Continue your breathing exercises at home. You may get muscle soreness. Advil (Ibuprofen) will help with this pain. Take your prescribed narcotic pain medication if needed.
* Showering is encouraged, but avoid soaking and vigorous scrubbing of your incisions for 3 weeks.
* Anticipate some fatigue and plan rest periods during the day.
* Do not drive a car until allowed to by the doctor.  It is safe to ride in the car, and you should always wear your seatbelt.
* After a bowel resection, bowel movements may be loose.  This should gradually improve.  Do not start fiber supplements until you are seen in the office.  Call the office if your bowel movements become more frequent or more watery.
* Continue a Low Residue/Transitional diet as instructed by the hospital staff for 3 weeks after the surgery.  After this, you may resume your normal diet.  Avoid any foods that normally cause constipation or diarrhea, any food that does not easily digest, such as nuts and seeds, raw meats or vegetables, and any peels.
* If you have steri-strips (small tapes) on your incision, they will usually peel off on their own.  You may remove them yourself after 7 days.  Call the office to arrange to have staples removed. Minimal redness and irritation and bruising at your incision is normal.  Redness that extends beyond the incision, becomes tender, or develops drainage is not normal, and may be a sign of an infection.

**Call the office if you experience any of the following symptoms:**

* Fever   (101º or higher)
* Severe redness or drainage from your incision
* Nausea or vomiting
* Watery diarrhea
* Any concerning change in your condition

 Call to arrange an office visit\_\_\_\_\_\_ days after discharge.