

## UOA MS

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**Patient Name:**

**Special Instructions:**

**Follow Up:**

# Gastrectomy, Total

## Care After

Refer to this sheet in the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after you leave the hospital. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. Your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, but unavoidable complications sometimes occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your caregiver. Patience and monitoring your diet are important to proper recovery. Recovery can take several months.

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Everyone recovers at a different pace. It will take time for the surgical cut(s) (*incisions*) to heal and for you to adjust to a new digestive process. Proper self-care will help you to recover and return to your normal activities.

- Follow your caregiver's instructions.
- Rest often, but try to move about each day.
- Gradually add light activity to your daily routine.
- Take pain or other medicines as directed. **Do not** drive if you are taking narcotics for pain.
- Keep the incision area(s) clean, dry, and protected. Follow your caregiver's instructions for incision care and changing your bandages (*dressings*).
- Follow up with your caregiver as directed. Regular blood tests to check for vitamin deficiencies and vitamin B injections are often necessary.
- You may develop a scar(s) at the incision site(s). Follow your caregiver's instructions for scar care after the incision area has healed.
- You may gradually resume most activities, including sexual activity, as directed.
- Menstrual cycles are commonly disrupted after surgery. You may be off schedule for up to a year.
- Always discuss your medicines with your caregiver before taking them.
- If you smoke, quit. Smoking slows the healing process.

### Special diet instructions:

- Eat small amounts of food throughout the day instead of large meals. If too much food moves

quickly through your system, this can lead to "dumping syndrome" (cramps, nausea, dizziness, discomfort).

- Your caregiver will help you understand the best foods to eat to prevent vitamin deficiencies or other complications. Eat foods high in calcium, iron, Vitamin C, and Vitamin D.
- It is common to experience heartburn and/or diarrhea. Ask your doctor about foods or medicines to help lessen these symptoms.
- Keeping a food diary may help you to know which foods to avoid.
- Follow all of your caregiver's dietary instructions.

## **SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:**

- You are having trouble caring for your incision(s).
- Your pain is not controlled by the medicines you have been given.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- You develop chills.
- You are feeling sick to your stomach ( *nauseous*).
- You are throwing up ( *vomiting*).
- You notice bleeding, skin irritation, drainage, redness, or pain.
- You have abdominal pain, bloating, pressure, or cramping.
- Your stools do not become firmer over time.
- You have frequent diarrhea or heartburn.
- You experience lightheadedness.
- You experience mental confusion.
- You have other new symptoms.
- You have questions or concerns.

## **SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:**

- Abdominal pain does not go away or becomes severe.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Repeated vomiting occurs.
- You develop an irregular heartbeat or chest pain.
- There is swelling or pain in your legs, calves, or feet.

## **MAKE SURE YOU:**

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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