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Date: April 2, 2015
Notes: Nurses can write personalized notes to patients here.

Discharge Instructions for Endarterectomy

Atherosclerosis is a disease that builds up deposits inside arteries. These deposits consist of fat (cholesterol) and scar tissue. Later on, they gather calcium and become like eggshells. This collection narrows the arteries. As a result, blood flow is restricted.

An endarterectomy is a surgery done to remove this build-up and improve blood flow.

Normal hospital stay is 1-7 days. It may take several days for full recovery.

[Steps to Take](#)

Home Care

- Keep the incision site clean and dry.
- If you have a dressing on the incision site, check with you doctor about changing it.
- Ask your doctor about when it is safe to shower, bathe, or soak in water.
- Avoid taking a bath, using a hot tub, or swimming until you have permission to do so.

Diet

- If you had open surgery, gradually return to your normal diet.
- Limit fat and cholesterol in your diet.

You may experience constipation after surgery. Drink fluids and add fiber to your diet to prevent this.

Physical Activity

- Ask your doctor when you will be able to return to work.
- Do not drive unless your doctor has given you permission to do so. Pain medication can affect your ability to drive.
- Avoid strenuous activities.

Medications

If you had to stop medicines before the procedure, ask your doctor when you can start again. Medicines often stopped include:

- Anti-inflammatory drugs (such as aspirin)
- Blood thinners like clopidogrel (Plavix) or warfarin (Coumadin)

Your doctor may prescribe a blood thinner.

If you are taking medications, follow these general guidelines:

- Take your medication as directed. Do not change the amount or the schedule.
- Do not stop taking them without talking to your doctor.
- Do not share them.
- Know what results and side effects to expect. Report them to your doctor.
- Some drugs can be dangerous when mixed. Talk to a doctor or pharmacist if you are taking more than one drug. This includes over-the-counter medication and herb or dietary supplements.
- Plan ahead for refills so you do not run out.

Lifestyle Changes

You and your doctor will plan lifestyle changes to help you recover. Your doctor may recommend that you:

- Maintain an appropriate diet and exercise regime.
- Reduce cholesterol.
- Stop smoking.
- Achieve and maintain a normal blood pressure.
- If you are overweight, lose weight.
- Try to reduce stress in your life.
- Limit alcohol intake.

It is expected that the initial symptoms due to the reduced blood flow will disappear. Initial symptoms may have been strokes, dizzy spells, digestive problems, leg cramping, or ankle ulcers.

Follow-up

Incisions will need to heal. Sutures (or staples) will be removed during the second week after surgery. Be sure to go to all of your follow-up appointments.

Call Your Doctor If Any of the Following Occurs

Monitor your recovery once you leave the hospital. As soon as you have a problem, alert your doctor. If any of the following occur, call your doctor:

- Signs of infection, including fever and chills
- Redness, swelling, increasing pain, excessive bleeding, or any discharge from the incision site
- Nausea and/or vomiting that you can't control with the medications you were given after surgery; or which persist for more than two days after discharge from the hospital

- Pain that you can't control with the medications you've been given
- Constipation or diarrhea
- Unable to urinate
- Dizziness or weakness
- Severe headaches, any problems with speech, vision
- Cough, shortness of breath, or chest pain

If you think you have an emergency, call for medical help right away.

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