



## Pilonidal Cleft Lift Post-op Instructions

### **Surgery**

You have just undergone surgery to remove your pilonidal disease and flatten out your natal cleft. This involves making an incision in between your buttocks and removing all of the diseased tissue. In addition, tissue from one side of your buttock will be rotated over to the other side in order to obliterate the cleft. This is accomplished with using 6-7 layers of stitches for a total of more than 100 sutures. There is some tension on your incision and it is important that you follow the activity instructions closely.

### **Drain Care**

Your nurse provided you with information on how to empty and recharge the drain, while you were in the hospital. It is important to empty the drain at least once per day and record the output. After emptying the drain, please squeeze the drain empty, before recapping, to allow for the drain to act as a suction device. If you have any questions about this, please call the office.

### **Incision**

Your incision is closed with a suture that will be removed in the office two weeks after pilonidal disease removal surgery. Steri strips will cover the incision in order to offer an added layer of safety for the cleft lift. A drain is often placed and is removed between 4 – 7 days after your surgery.

### **Pain**

Most of the time patients can manage post-operative pain with tylenol alone. Do not take advil/ibuprofen/motrin for 2 weeks after this surgery.

### **Diet**

There are no restrictions on your diet after this procedure. You may find that some foods are better tolerated by your body and others that are not. Use your own judgment and stay away from foods that may irritate your system during your recovery from the cleft lift. If you find that

you are constipated after you are discharged from the hospital, you may start to take Colace, Metamucil or Citrucel.

## **Bathing**

After your cleft lift procedure, you may take a shower after the drain is removed. Be careful not to scrub at the incision line; simply let the water run over the incision and gently pat the area dry. Please continue to use Hibiclens® soap daily.

## **Activity**

Following the cleft lift surgery, you are encouraged to do as much walking as is comfortable. You may climb stairs, taking them one at a time and slowly. You are not to operate a vehicle while you are having discomfort or taking pain medication. This will interfere with driving safely. Your surgeon will tell you when it is safe to resume driving. You are asked not to do any lifting over 25 pounds for the first six weeks following surgery. The doctor will tell you when it is safe to do more. If lifting causes pain in your incision, please stop. For the first week after pilonidal disease removal surgery, it is very important that you do not sit on the incision at all. You may find that for long car rides in the first few weeks after surgery it is helpful to wear comfortable, padded bike shorts.

## **Precaution**

Although not commonly seen after a cleft lift, any incision is susceptible to infection. If you develop a fever of 101 degrees or above, have unexpected pain, redness or drainage from the incision, please contact the office.

## **Follow-up**

You will likely need two appointments in the first two weeks after the cleft lift. The first is 4-7 days following the surgery to remove the drain and the second is to remove your suture. Please call the office to schedule your post-operative appointments. Call the office a day after you go home to schedule your appointment.

Call the office if you have questions or concerns about your recovery: 617-466-3373